

# MEN WHO CONTROL OUR UNIVERSITIES

*THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMPOSITION  
OF GOVERNING BOARDS OF THIRTY  
LEADING AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES*

HUBERT PARK BECK

*With a Foreword by*

GEORGE S. COUNTS



KING'S CROWN PRESS  
MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS, NEW YORK



MEN WHO CONTROL  
OUR UNIVERSITIES



THE  
LIBRARY OF THE  
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
AND  
ZOOLOGY  
OF THE  
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

# MEN WHO CONTROL OUR UNIVERSITIES

*THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMPOSITION  
OF GOVERNING BOARDS OF THIRTY  
LEADING AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES*

HUBERT PARK BECK

*With a Foreword by*  
GEORGE S. COUNTS



KING'S CROWN PRESS  
MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS, NEW YORK

1947

COPYRIGHT 1947 BY

HUBERT PARK BECK

*Printed in the United States of America*

*by Vermont Printing Co.*

KING'S CROWN PRESS

is a division of Columbia University Press organized for the purpose of making certain scholarly material available at minimum cost. Toward that end, the publishers have adopted every reasonable economy except such as would interfere with a legible format. The work is presented substantially as submitted by the author, without the usual editorial attention of Columbia University Press.

H M S

*First printing 1947*

*Second printing 1948*

## FOREWORD

THERE WAS a time not so long ago when any inquiry into the relations of our universities to social forces was regarded as improper. It was assumed that institutions of higher learning operate in a realm of disinterested scholarship far above the play of social forces. It was assumed further that members of boards of trustees, when they sit in conference on educational policy, dissociate themselves from their interests as private citizens and become the guardians of universal truth.

Today no thoughtful student of education would support this view. Yet we have had very few scholarly studies of that uniquely American institution, the lay board of trustees, which links the university to society and generally has the final word on all matters of large policy. Such studies are particularly necessary in an age like the present when the balance of social forces is undergoing profound change. Clearly the time has come for directing the attention of both educators and citizens to the question of the reconstruction of this institution. The inherited pattern, with its limitation of membership almost wholly to a small segment of the population, obviously requires modification.

Dr. Beck's study is the first really penetrating and scholarly inquiry in this field. In both the assembling and the treatment of data he has gone far beyond the work of any other investigator. Also, in the light of his findings, he makes a series of recommendations for the reform of these boards that deserve careful consideration. *Men Who Control Our Universities* is a notable work which should be studied and discussed by all who are interested in the course of higher education in the United States.

GEORGE S. COUNTS

*New York City*  
*January 16, 1947*







## PREFACE

THIS BOOK has been written in the hope that it will enlarge the perspective of American teachers, parents, students, educational administrators, and other citizens in viewing the forces that are shaping American education, public and private, particularly at the college and university level. An increase in understanding may serve in turn to facilitate the task of persons seeking to lessen the role of higher education as a class instrument and to increase its service for the common good.

The first six chapters provide the background for the study, setting forth among other major considerations the remarkable growth of American higher education and some revealing indications of the extent to which a few universities and their governing boards occupy a dominant position. Chapters VII through XIII describe the findings of the biographical analysis of the trustees of the leading universities studied, together with the results of the opinion poll and of the examination of salaries received and income taxes paid. The final chapter presents a somewhat detailed commentary on the findings, and concludes with a number of proposals for improving the composition of governing boards.

The author's obligations to others who have assisted in this enterprise are too numerous to mention here fully. Particular gratitude is due to the following: to Professors George S. Counts, John K. Norton, Donald P. Cottrell, George D. Strayer, William H. Kilpatrick, and Jesse H. Newlon, from whose teachings came the realization of the need for this study, and from whom came also personal encouragement; to his sister, Camille Beck, who helped gather the data; to Sarah Ford McDuffie, whose fidelity, accuracy, and skill in coding and tabulating the data deserve high praise; to Mary Helen Carpenter, Elizabeth Bradley, D. D. Droba, Herman O. Duncan, Sara Frances Duncan, Flora Huggins, Evelyn Kerr, F. E. Louraine, Eleanor Poland, Edgar L. Paris, Virginia Proctor, Hallie Mae Reed, Robert N. Stanforth, and Adele Teschion, all of whom shared in some measure the labor of the research; to Eduard C. Lindeman, Lucille B. Milner, and Malcolm M. Willey, who made available important records; to Earl J. McGrath, for a critical reading of an early draft; to various staff members of Teachers College Library, Columbia University, the University of Min-

nesota Library, the Rhode Island State College Library, and the Library of Congress; and especially to Dorothy Fahs Beck, his wife, whose able and faithful help was invaluable, particularly in the latter stages of the study.

Permission to quote from copyrighted materials has been granted by the following: *American Journal of Science*, American Association of University Professors, American Council on Education, *American Teacher*, D. Appleton-Century Co., W. A. Ashbrook, Association Press, M. M. Chambers, *Education*, Walter C. Eells, Edwin R. Embree, Ginn and Co., Harcourt, Brace and Co., *Harper's Magazine*, D. C. Heath and Co., Houghton Mifflin Co., B. W. Huebsch (Viking Press), Iowa State College Press, *Journal of Higher Education*, Macmillan Co., A. N. Marquis Co., McGraw-Hill Book Co., Scott Nearing, Oxford University Press, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, D. B. Prentice, *New Republic*, Science Press (American Association for the Advancement of Science), *School and Society*, and Stephen S. Visser.

H. P. B.

## CONTENTS

I. THE PROBLEM AND ITS IMPORTANCE . . . . .	1
II. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	8
III. THE PLAN AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY . . . . .	14
IV. SIZE AND EMINENCE OF THE UNIVERSITIES SELECTED . . . . .	21
V. POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNING BOARDS . . . . .	28
VI. QUALIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR UNIVERSITY GOV- ERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	35
VII. OCCUPATIONS OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	47
VIII. INCOMES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	62
IX. MAJOR BUSINESS OFFICES HELD BY GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	74
X. AGES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	84
XI. SEX, RESIDENCE, AND REGION OF BIRTH OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	92
XII. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ON GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS . . . . .	98
XIII. METHODS OF APPOINTMENT AND LENGTH OF SERVICE IN RELATION TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS . . . . .	116
XIV. CONCLUDING COMMENT . . . . .	128
EXHIBIT A: NAMES OF TRUSTEES STUDIED . . . . .	161
EXHIBIT B: BIOGRAPHICAL BLANK . . . . .	167
EXHIBIT C: TABLES . . . . .	168
NOTES . . . . .	199
INDEX . . . . .	223



# TABLES

1. Universities and Number of Trustees Included in Study, by Type of Institution	168
2. Proportion of Faculty, Students, and Degrees in Higher Education, 1935-36, under the Control of the 30 Governing Boards Studied	169
3. Proportion of Receipts, Expenditures, and Property in Higher Education, 1935-36, under the Control of the 30 Governing Boards Studied	170
4. Various Indications of Eminence of the 30 Leading Universities Studied	171
5. Occupational Distribution of Trustees, by Type of University	173
6. Occupational Distribution of Trustees, by University	174
7. Occupational Distribution of Trustees Included in This Study and of Persons Listed in <i>Who's Who in America</i> , 1934-35	176
8. Occupational Distribution of Trustees Compared with That of All Workers in the United States	177
9. Occupational Distribution of Trustees of 20 Institutions of Higher Learning, by Decades, 1860-1930, as Reported by McGrath, and of Trustees of the 30 Institutions Analyzed in This Study, 1934-35	178
10. Occupational Distribution of Male Trustees on Governing Boards of State Institutions of Higher Education as Found by This Study and as Reported by Counts	179
11. Occupational Distribution of Trustees in This Study and of Trustees Analyzed by Nearing, 1917	180
12. Occupational Distribution of Trustees of Nongovernmental Universities and of American Foundations	181
13. Distribution of Minimum Incomes of 302 Trustees for Whom Data Were Available	182
14. Arrays of Known Taxable Incomes (1924) and Salaries (c. 1935) of Trustees, by University	183
15. Distribution of Minimum Incomes of 297 Trustees in the Two Major Occupational Groups for Whom Income Data Were Available	186
16. Major Offices or Directorships Held by University Trustees in Various Types of Business Enterprises	187
17. Major Offices or Directorships in the 400 Largest Business Organizations in the United States Held by the University Trustees Studied	188
18. Percentage of Trustees Holding Major Offices or Directorships in Various Types of Business Enterprises, by University	189
19. Percentage of Trustees Holding Major Offices or Directorships in One or More of the 400 Largest Businesses, by University	190
20. Age and Length of Service of Trustees, by University	191
21. Age Distribution of University Trustees and Certain Other Groups	192
22. Urban-rural Distribution of Place of Residence of Trustees, by Type of University	193
23. Distribution of Trustees by Region of Birth and Region of Residence as Compared with Distribution of Universities Studied and Total Population	194
24. Opinion Poll Responses of 301 Trustees and Corresponding United States Voting Records and Gallup Poll Responses	195
25. Number of Trustees Designated by Various Methods, by University	197
26. Methods of Designating Trustees in Relation to Characteristics of Trustees	198

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS IMPORTANCE

*These twenty thousand men and women [governing board members] control the purposes and power of colleges and universities, and through them, in large measure, the distinctive characteristics of American civilization—ELLIOTT, CHAMBERS, AND ASHBROOK.<sup>1</sup>*

#### THE BASIC PLAN OF THE STUDY

IN THE RAPIDLY changing pattern of current society, universities occupy a key position of power and influence. To an important degree the control of these universities rests with their governing boards, who make many basic decisions that embody choice among conflicting ideologies and group needs. In view of the importance of these trustees to the public welfare, the present study is designed primarily to find and analyze available objective evidence regarding the social and economic characteristics of the members of the governing boards of thirty leading American universities. Secondly, it undertakes, in conclusion, to evaluate—necessarily in more subjective terms—some of the social and educational implications of the characteristics of these board members and to point to certain readjustments in the composition of such boards that seem, in the author's judgment, to be indicated. The data collected and analyzed regarding board members pertain to their occupations, incomes, business offices and directorships, age, sex, residence, type of board membership, and length of service, together with other more miscellaneous information likewise suggesting their social and economic orientation. Such facts are purposely selected for intensive analysis since the author believes, but does not undertake to prove, that these characteristics of board members significantly affect their decisions on basic university policy.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

Under any form of government the control of education is a basic public problem. In building and maintaining their power the Nazis, the Fascists, the Communists, and the Japanese Imperialists all recognized frankly its importance and took drastic measures to assure that educational institutions under their control serve the ends set by their basic ob-

jectives and philosophy. In the United States the problem of control is complicated by a greater diversity of views as to national ends and means and by a greater multiplicity of educational institutions and organizations without a central controlling authority; it is confused further by a vast amount of propaganda on various critical issues, and is overshadowed by various other problems of immediate urgency. Despite general obscurity regarding the issues of control at all levels of education from the neighborhood nursery to the university, efforts toward control of specific aspects by special interest groups are by no means lacking. Here and there, one group strives to improve the physical well-being of the pupils; another, to increase the study of specific vocational subjects; one, to decrease educational budgets; another, to increase budgets; yet another, to secure the appointment, promotion, or discharge of some individual; and still another, to remove some controversial book from the reach of the young. The significance of the total cumulative effect of these efforts on public education is easy to overlook. Even more hidden, but inseparable from these specific efforts toward control are the conflicts of ideologies respecting progress, democracy, morals, religion, science, capitalism, labor, agrarianism, and numerous other aspects of the evolving pattern of American life. The struggle to determine the role of the schools in the resolution of these larger national conflicts proceeds unceasingly on all levels of education. The present study endeavors to throw light on certain very limited phases of these conflicts at the university level. To this end the members of the controlling boards of thirty leading universities in this country have been singled out for special study.

#### THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The focus of the present study on the control of higher education is particularly timely in view of the growing importance of higher education in our national life and its potential influence on the nature and direction of social change. Between 1900 and 1936 the number of students enrolled in higher education in the United States increased more than four-fold. When restated in terms of the proportion of college-age youth enrolled in institutions of higher education, the increase during this period is still greater than three-fold.<sup>2</sup> Higher education is now one of the major enterprises of the nation. Before the present postwar educational boom, its students numbered more than a million and its teaching faculty and specialized staff, exclusive of clerical and custodial workers, over 110,000. In the school year 1935-36 expenditures for higher educational institutions totalled \$589,000,000—only 10 percent less than the total revenue received by the federal government in 1936 from personal and corporate income taxes. Considered in other terms, the expenditures of



higher educational institutions in the United States may be thought of as greater than the total combined income in 1935 of the populations of Vermont, Delaware, Nevada, and North Dakota.<sup>3</sup>

More important than its growth and size is the role of higher education in molding the lives of the country's future leaders. Today in the United States no youth dreams of entering the professions of medicine, dentistry, law, or teaching without first studying at some appropriate institution of higher learning. Graduation from college or its equivalent is now required for practically all professional civil service positions in the federal government, and for many on the state and local level as well. Eighty-two percent of the persons listed in the 1934-35 edition of *Who's Who in America* attended college,<sup>4</sup> the great majority of whom attended before the year 1900, when less than 4 percent of the youth between 18 and 21 were enrolled in higher education courses. Likewise, college graduates are found in higher proportions in the more responsible business positions than in those of lesser rank and status.<sup>5</sup>

Neither the foregoing indications of size, nor those of prominence in the training of eminent citizens, reveal adequately the expanding role of higher education in social change. The constantly increasing contributions from university laboratories, farms, experiment stations, and professional schools to important scientific and technological developments, although well-known, are all too easily forgotten. Countless other scientific discoveries and inventions, seemingly originating outside university circles, actually are based on university research and are conceived and developed by persons who in their educational backgrounds are products of higher education.

The role of universities in relation to change in the political, economic, and social structure is by no means as clear as their role in relation to technological advance. An obvious evidence of university influence in the political sphere is the practice of calling university professors for expert testimony on such governmental problems as taxation, monetary policy, business cycles, and unemployment. Another is the frequent granting of leaves of absence to university staff members to permit them to devote all their time to government work. The technics of public opinion polls, developed at several universities, afford another conspicuous illustration of such university influence. In addition, universities sometimes foster change indirectly through their policy of requiring "a contribution to human knowledge" from candidates for the doctorate. The selective influence of the university through encouragement of certain types of investigations and through disapproval of others is great indeed. Nevertheless, the role of universities in fostering change is less clear in the social than in the natural sciences, for the resistance of human institutions to

innovation must be reckoned with. As Charles A. Beard has pointed out, "the ideology which surrounds political institutions generally runs against the notion that social inventiveness is an essential quality of the good citizen."<sup>6</sup> The same persons and organizations that foster unrestrained development of the natural sciences and technology commonly favor development in the social sciences in certain restricted channels only.

These comments are not intended to intimate that in the social sciences universities are operating in a wholly negative fashion, or wholly in support of the *status quo*, for a number of illustrations of reforms receiving university stimulation or encouragement might be cited.<sup>7</sup> Such instances of specific criticisms or reforms of university origin, however, illustrate rather the role of the university as a selective agent, for it must be remembered always that certain other criticisms and proposed reforms may have been suppressed, deprecated, or ignored. With the swelling of enrollments in higher education, and with the development of university schools for journalists, educators, and workers in several other types of key positions, this selective function of higher education has become vastly more important than in earlier years.

The sponsorship of educational changes by universities in the last few decades has constituted an especially important channel for their growing influence on the thought and action of the American people, both in the technical and social field. Developments that have contributed to this result have been the increase in the number and size of these institutions, the growth of graduate study, the rapid proliferation of the curriculum, the elective system, the development of personnel programs and guidance practices, the emphasis upon research and experimentation, the creation of demonstration schools, the growth of apprentice-teaching, the increased certification requirements for teachers, the pressures for higher degrees, and the appearance of a host of educational specialties. With education in most parts of the world undergoing much criticism and change, the universities have provided a place where such changes could be studied, nurtured, and guided. After making due allowance for important sources of educational change outside the universities, as for example the departments of research in school systems of large cities and instances of leadership in certain state and city systems, it can still be said that in the United States at present the universities exercise profound influence over both public and private education at all levels. As Cubberley expressed it in the year 1925, "in the field of education . . . almost the entire subject has been created anew in the universities during the past twenty-five years."<sup>8</sup>

Who then in the United States of America wield the control of this highly important educational instrument of expanding influence on the

youth of today, on the leaders of tomorrow, and on the technological and social life of world society? Legally, at least, and probably to a large extent also in practice, the basic policies of these institutions of higher learning are controlled by their governing boards. Not all university boards, however, are equally influential. Unquestionably outstanding are the boards of a small group of thirty universities of recognized eminence that dominate to a remarkable extent the course and pattern of all university and college study. The members of the controlling boards of these thirty universities belonging to the Association of American Universities number a mere 734, a group not much larger than the United States Congress. Although differing from Congress in many respects, these boards resemble this federal body in their strategic role and probable ultimate influence on the course of American life. It is the 734 members of these particular boards who have been singled out for analysis in this study.

#### LIMITATIONS AND BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The approach in this study to the analysis of university control is admittedly oblique. Instead of studying directly the actual functioning of these boards and their influence on university policies, the report merely presents and analyzes chiefly such significant social and economic information about the members as can be found in various public records. Previous investigators have also used this indirect approach, doubtless because to them, as to the present author, the direct approach was impractical, especially since interest centered on the social implications of the process of university control.

The difficulties of the direct approach are readily apparent. Usually, no verbatim record of board deliberations, and often not even a summary, is made available for public study. Even if such records were available, they would be inadequate as a revelation of the struggle for control, for much significance often inheres in a tone of voice, a nod of the head, a smile, or a single gesture. Also, many conversations and other situations that affect decisions on university policy occur away from board meetings, under circumstances that cannot be separated from the daily contacts, thoughts, and feelings of members. The impact of an individual's social orientation on his acts is likewise exceedingly subtle, and often is revealed only implicitly through casual conversations, actions, or lack of action. Doubtless many board members and administrative officials are quite unaware of the functions they perform in relation to the social stratification of contemporary society. Obviously the details necessary for a frontal attack on the problem of understanding the control processes are almost completely lacking to an outsider. A critical observer would seldom if ever be admitted to board meetings and if he were, freedom of expression by



board members would be so inhibited as to preclude valid findings. On the other hand, a participant (i.e. a fellow board member) would not be free to reveal critical observations, lest he offend, if not actually betray, colleagues on the board and thus seriously prejudice future relationships. Thus resort to an indirect approach seemed the only alternative.

In the use of this method, however, the following two basic assumptions are made, which the study does not undertake to prove: (1) that the boards are more than mere figureheads and actually do decide basic matters of university policy, and (2) that knowledge of group composition in terms of the occupation, income, age, sex, residence, corporation connections, etc., of board members is important in understanding and predicting group judgments and actions on policy issues. Data pertinent to the first assumption are reviewed briefly in Chapter V, which deals with the legal powers and functions of university boards. Only the most intimate knowledge of the actual functioning of these boards, however, could establish the extent to which these powers and functions are actually exercised. In practice, some of the powers must necessarily be delegated to the university president, the administrative officers, and to a lesser extent to the faculty; to these subordinates the boards doubtless often turn for the factual basis for decisions. On the other hand, the university president and his hierarchy of subordinates regularly carry on in close conformity to what is believed to be the wishes of the governing board. To the extent that the reader believes that governing boards do not actually determine policy, the findings should be discounted as an indication of the nature and direction of the controls of higher education. Some discussion of the second assumption appears in chapter introductions and at other points, but direct proof is not undertaken since the offering of such evidence would involve major and impractical digressions into social psychology and the related social sciences. As to its general validity, however, the author personally has little doubt, for to assume otherwise would be to overlook basic tenets of sociology and psychology.

In addition to these limitations inherent in the method adopted, the area of study was restricted for practical reasons in two other less basic respects: (1) the analysis dealt primarily with 30 leading universities, the total United States membership of the Association of American Universities, and (2) the study undertook to depict a cross section of board membership at one particular time rather than historical trends. Both limitations of scope were essential to intensive study. Because of the first limitation, the reader is cautioned against assuming the findings to be equally valid for all institutions of higher learning. Since the trustees of smaller, less eminent institutions are undoubtedly less highly selected, the group studied must not be considered a representative sampling of

university and college boards in general. Consequently, the findings must not be uncritically applied to other universities. It is the key position of these universities, as demonstrated in Chapter IV, that gives the findings general significance—not any presumed representativeness of some larger universe. Likewise, in view of the second limitation, the findings must not be assumed to be relevant beyond the general historical period to which they apply. Since board members' terms are long and overlapping, however, board composition changes slowly, as do also the underlying social and economic conditions that their membership reflects; thus the findings can be assumed to be typical of these university boards beyond a given year, and probably beyond a single decade.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the fundamental nature of governing boards does change significantly in the course of half a century or more, as another study has demonstrated.<sup>10</sup> After a review of present findings, one might perchance venture certain personal predictions of the more distant future, but their validity could be established or refuted only by the passage of time.

The import of these comments as to the problem and its importance, limitations, and underlying assumptions will become further apparent in the remainder of this report. In the early chapters that follow, various background information is presented, including a review of previous studies, a detailed statement of the method and sources, a survey of the eminence of the universities studied, a discussion of the legal powers and functions of governing boards, and a review of the judgments of others as to what qualifications are desirable in trustees. Beginning with Chapter VII, the statistical findings are presented and analyzed. The final chapter comments on the significance of the findings for higher education and social policy.

## CHAPTER II

### PREVIOUS STUDIES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*When one has sensitized himself to the dangers to democracy inherent in a "packed" school board, regardless of whether the packing be accidentally or designedly effected, he cannot fail to be perturbed, provided he is desirous of seeing the democratic way of life maintained and strengthened, by the picture of the school-board situation in the United States which researchers probing into the facts of board membership have made available to us—HAROLD C. HAND.<sup>1</sup>*

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES OF UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES

**D**ESPITE THEIR STRATEGIC ROLE, the members of governing boards of American universities have been the object of relatively little intensive investigation. A search of the literature disclosed only three such studies published in detail. Basically all three were analyses of the occupational distribution of governing board members, and in so far as they dealt with higher education, all were brief. One was concerned primarily with the boards of education of public elementary and secondary schools; the other two were of very limited scope, their combined length totalling only 17 printed pages. These three studies have been supplemented by an occasional paragraph appearing in print summarizing in a very general way an unpublished investigation.

The first of the three published studies was conducted by Scott Nearing and appeared in 1917.<sup>2</sup> In the *Educational Directory*,<sup>3</sup> Nearing found listed 189 institutions with student enrollments of 500 or more. Of these institutions, 143 supplied him with lists giving the occupations of their governing board members. These lists formed the basis of his analysis and necessarily limited the factual data to occupational and sex distributions. Nearing found that women constituted 3 percent of the total group of trustees, but less than one percent of the trustees of denominational institutions. In regard to occupational distribution, he concluded:

The college and university boards are almost completely dominated by merchants, manufacturers, capitalists, corporation officials, bankers, doctors, lawyers, educa-



tors and ministers. These nine occupations contain a total of 1,936 persons, nearly four-fifths of the total number of trustees. . . .

A new term must be coined to suggest the idea of an educational system owned and largely supported by the people but dominated by the business world. Perhaps "plutocratized education" will prove as acceptable as any other phrase.

Ten years later, an analytical study by George S. Counts appeared in this area, under the title, *The Social Composition of Boards of Education: A Study in the Social Control of Public Education*.<sup>4</sup> Counts' study dealt primarily with the members of boards of education of public elementary and secondary schools on the district, city, county, and state level. These he compared briefly with state college and university boards. His findings indicated that among these various types, college and university boards had the highest proportion of proprietors (33 percent), and except for state boards of education, also the highest proportion of professional persons (41 percent), but no representation at all from manual labor.<sup>5</sup> In comparing the agricultural college boards with those of other colleges and universities included in his study, Counts commented:

Apparently, farmers are thought to have some special rights or interests with respect to the control of the agricultural college, but in the control of other forms of education they are assumed to have neither rights nor interests.<sup>6</sup>

Counts' findings substantiated, in general, those of Nearing, but added information on other factors, such as age and education. He summed up his view of the significance of his findings for public education at all levels as follows:

Is the school to be conceived as a broadly educative agency, an agency which may be trusted to strive earnestly, and without prejudice, to give to the youth of the nation genuine insight into the present complex industrial civilization, or is it to become an instrument by means of which some dominant class or sect impresses upon the mind of the coming generation its own special bias or point of view? That the latter conception of the school may triumph in our society is suggested by certain of the data brought to light in the present investigation. . . .

We may at least harbor the hope that the school at some time and place may serve the larger and more generous purpose.<sup>7</sup>

The other of these three major previous studies of the social composition of American college and university governing boards is that by Earl J. McGrath. McGrath expended great effort to discover the occupations of trustees of 15 private colleges and universities and 5 state institutions at ten-year intervals from 1860 to 1930, and to present the trends.<sup>8</sup> He reported that in 1860 clergymen comprised 39 percent of the membership of the governing boards of these private institutions, but by 1930 had dropped to 7 percent. During the same period, the percent of business men, exclusive of bankers, rose from 23 to 32, and that of bankers, from

5 to 20.<sup>9</sup> For the state institutions studied, business men were still at the same level of 24 percent in 1930 that they started with in 1860, but bankers had increased from 4 to 13 percent, while farmers had declined from 15 percent to 9. At no time was any board member classified as a laborer or a mechanic and only a few in any decade were engineers or housewives.<sup>10</sup> On the basis of his findings, McGrath concluded:

... In so far as the institutions selected represent other similar institutions, the control of higher education in America, both public and private, has been placed in the hands of a small group of the population, namely financiers and business men. From two-thirds to three-fourths of the persons on these boards in recent decades have been selected from this group.<sup>11</sup>

These and other findings of previous studies are compared with present findings at appropriate points in later chapters.

In addition to these three studies published in full, certain other investigations of university board composition remain unpublished or have been published only in very abbreviated form. For example, Evans Clark, prior to 1923, undertook as a Ph.D. thesis project to investigate the occupations of governing board members of 7 privately controlled institutions and 22 state institutions. His results have been published only indirectly in the form of references to his findings by other authors.<sup>12</sup> He is reported to have found that bankers, financiers, manufacturers, merchants, public utility officers, publishers, and lawyers composed 56 percent of the members of privately controlled boards and 68 percent of publicly controlled boards, while farmers were represented only in very small percentages, and labor, not at all.<sup>13</sup> His comments on board composition are quoted as follows:

We have allowed the education of our youth to fall into the absolute control of a group of men who represent not only a minority of the total population but have, at the same time, enormous economic and business stakes in what kind of an education it shall be.<sup>14</sup>

Another study published only in brief was that undertaken in 1932 by a student of Jerome Davis, W. Carl Calhoun. Rev. Calhoun studied the occupations and directorships of the trustees of 27 American colleges and universities having endowments of \$10,000,000 or more, 4 of which were state universities.<sup>15</sup> Information was obtained for 630, or 96 percent of the 659 trustees of these institutions. Of these 630, 40 percent were found to have affiliations with banks, trust companies, insurance firms, or investment houses; 22 percent, with manufacturing or merchandising establishments; 18 percent, with public utilities; and 10 percent with railroads. Twenty-four percent were professional persons; 3 percent were judges; and one percent, editors or publishers.

Similarly, J. A. Leighton, at one time chairman of Committee T of the

American Association of University Professors, investigated the occupational composition of the governing boards of 25 universities. He published his findings as part of the report of his committee, but reduced them to a few generalized sentences, of which the following constitute the major part:

Boards of trustees are composed chiefly of members of the vested interests and the professions—bankers, manufacturers, commercial magnates, lawyers, physicians, and clergymen. It is a somewhat rare thing to find on a board a representative of either the teaching profession or scientific research. Still rarer to find a representative of the industrial workers! An investigation of the personnel of the boards of twenty-five universities bears out the above statement.<sup>16</sup>

To a small degree the unpublished Ph.D. thesis of Charles A. Baugher dealing with trends in church-related arts colleges since 1900 is also pertinent to board composition. In his study, Baugher examined trends in the proportion of clergymen on the governing boards of these colleges and found, as McGrath had previously, a decline in the representation of the clergy.<sup>17</sup> Likewise a survey of colleges of Lutheran affiliation by R. J. Leonard, E. S. Evenden, and F. B. O'Rear published in 1929 included occupational data for 13 senior colleges and 3 junior colleges.<sup>18</sup> Their findings indicated that clergymen constituted 42 percent of the 321 trustees of the senior colleges.

All these earlier studies, though seldom detailed and in most cases confined to occupational analyses, have served, nevertheless, to call attention to the remarkable unbalance in the vocational composition of university boards. In each the author has indicated concern over the control of higher education. That none took the next step and examined the actual workings of these boards is a significant indication of the difficulties of the direct approach, and especially so since at least one of these investigators tried this method and found his way blocked.

#### RELATED STUDIES OF BOARD COMPOSITION

These studies of the composition of university boards have been supplemented by studies following a similar method in closely related fields. Eduard C. Lindeman, for example, analyzed various biographical data respecting the board members of 70 representative foundations,<sup>19</sup> and Harold Coe Coffman, similar data respecting trustees of 55 foundations actively participating in the child welfare movement.<sup>20</sup> Both were unable to find occupational information for substantial portions of the boards included. A number of similar studies also have been made of public school boards of education. At the time the data were collected for this study, at least 9 master's theses had been written on the social composition of boards of education of this or that county; at least 15, on boards within



given states;<sup>21</sup> and several others, on boards of types less readily classified. Most of these reports were not published. The better known studies of national scope dealing with public school boards are those of Counts, Nearing, Struble, and Arnett.<sup>22</sup> Although outside the immediate scope of this report, they provide perspective by indicating the existence of similar or related problems of board composition at other levels of education.

#### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

The present study attempts to go beyond these earlier studies in a number of important respects, of which the following are five:

1. It presents information of broader scope and in greater wealth of detail than did previous studies. Of former studies, that of broadest coverage analyzed data only on sex, age, occupation, education, and length of service, whereas the present study adds to this list net taxable income, salary, corporation and business connections, method of selection, and numerous miscellaneous types of information. Likewise, occupational and educational information was gathered in fuller detail for the present report than for previous ones.

2. Unlike most earlier analyses, this study is deliberately focused on the prominent universities. It neither lumps together small struggling unaccredited colleges in the hinterlands with the powerful endowed universities, nor groups ill-supported state institutions with the relatively more fortunate ones that rival the most distinguished nongovernmental universities.

3. It covers a group of universities selected solely by a criterion of eminence, and was not, as in certain previous studies, dependent on the decision of the universities involved to supply, or not to supply, the requested information. Since in the present study no institution was omitted because of difficulties in obtaining needed information, the nature of the institutions covered is more precisely defined than in earlier investigations.

4. It utilizes sources that are on the whole more reliable than those used in earlier studies. No previous inquiry encountered during this study purports to have been based on information gathered directly from board members, although presumably this source is the most accurate for personal information of the type collected. In the present report, much of the data analyzed were obtained by direct correspondence with board members, while the remaining sources were by their nature subject to little error.

5. In contrast to former studies of university boards, this study presents a more intensive analysis of the findings—one that includes numerous

cross tabulations, comparisons with previous studies, and considerable discussion of related materials, such as those on the function of university boards and the eminence of the institutions included.

These differences between the present and previous studies, together with the large areas of new material explored, appear more than sufficient to justify another study of the social and economic composition of the boards of America's leading universities. The plan and sources of the present study are described in more detail in the following chapter.

### CHAPTER III

## THE PLAN AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

*Of course, one cannot think, understand and plan without a basis of fact, and since facts do not lie around in plain view, they have to be discovered—JOHN DEWEY.<sup>1</sup>*

#### UNIVERSITIES SELECTED

TO ASSURE MAXIMUM SIGNIFICANCE for the findings, it seemed advisable to select the universities to be studied by means of the strict application of an objective criterion of eminence. A random sampling of all types of universities and colleges would have given a confused and less significant picture by mixing the leading and highly influential universities with institutions of lesser importance, while a sampling determined by the relative availability of information as to trustees would have produced a group of miscellaneous institutions of unknown characteristics. The basic plan for the study provided, therefore, that only those 30 institutions of higher education in the United States that were members of the Association of American Universities during the year selected were to be included. The membership list of this association appeared admirably suited for the purpose, for it consists, so to speak, of the elite inner circle in higher education. Its membership is limited to invited institutions and invitations require a two-thirds vote of the members. A fuller picture of the eminence of the universities included in membership is given in Chapter IV.

The 30 universities actually covered are listed in Table 1 in the Appendix. The list includes the complete membership of the association with the exception of McGill University, Toronto University, and Duke University. The two Canadian institutions were omitted because they were not an integral part of higher education in the United States, and Duke University, because it was not admitted to membership until after the date chosen for this study. Massachusetts Institute of Technology and California Institute of Technology are regarded as universities for purposes of the Association of American Universities, and hence are so regarded in this study also. With the exceptions mentioned, the study covers



the governing boards of all members of this association, and thus is not technically a sample of a larger group. Fortunately, this membership list is admirably constituted for comparing board members of leading privately controlled universities (that is, universities not controlled by government at the federal, state, or local level) with those of leading state institutions, since 14 of the 30 are readily grouped as state universities and the other 16 are essentially nongovernmental in character.<sup>2</sup> This dichotomy provides a basis for many later comparisons.

#### TRUSTEES SELECTED

In decisions as to the trustees to be included, complete coverage rather than a sample was again the end sought. After a consideration of the availability of the desired materials for various years, the academic year 1934-35 was chosen as a suitable period for study. Trustees holding office during that year on the boards of the chosen universities were included with two major exceptions as follows: When a change in membership was known to have occurred during the year, the trustee who had served the greater part of the year was chosen. When the change had occurred exactly in the middle of the year, the person who had served during the first half was selected. To provide a normal picture for each board, the few members listed as recently deceased were included if their places had not yet been filled.<sup>3</sup> Ex officio members were included except when it was learned that such members were without a vote. Honorary members, on the other hand, were excluded. Bicameral boards were regarded as single boards and members of both branches were included.<sup>4</sup>

The number of members on the various boards, as thus defined, is indicated in Table 1. Although a total of 734 memberships is reported, actually only 727 different persons were included since the following 7 persons were members of 2 of the boards studied:

Newton D. Baker  
Harry Chandler  
Walter S. Gifford  
Arthur P. Rugg

Edward L. Ryerson, Jr.  
Albert L. Scott  
John Stuart

In the tabulations each of these 7 men was included once for each of the two board memberships held.<sup>5</sup> If each had been included for but one institution, and excluded with respect to the other, even though serving both, proper comparisons between institutions would have been precluded. Moreover, the double memberships and votes of these persons and their resulting double influence would appear to warrant double counting. Possibly such persons are more than doubly influential by virtue of the prestige and additional experience resulting from multiple member-

ship. For convenience, the 734 board memberships are referred to as "members," in spite of this minor duplication.

Apparently interuniversity ties of this type are not uncommon. The interlocking memberships of these 7 trustees, which involve 11 of the 30 universities,<sup>6</sup> would be considerably more numerous if instances of members serving on one board who had previously served on another of the 30 had also been counted. Moreover, a number of the trustees held memberships on governing boards of colleges and universities not included in the study. For example, one of the 7 trustees holding 2 trusteeships within the group of 30 universities also held memberships on 6 other governing boards of institutions of higher education, not members of the association, making a total of 8 such memberships for this trustee.<sup>7</sup> The practice of multiple memberships seemed more characteristic of nongovernmental institutions than of state universities and colleges.

The lists of board members included many prominent citizens, of whom the following were among the better known:

Charles Francis Adams  
John E. Aldred  
Joseph S. Ames  
Frank B. Anderson  
James R. Angell  
Sewell L. Avery  
Newton D. Baker  
Stephen Baker  
George A. Ball  
Clarence A. Barbour  
Harry J. Bauer  
William Adams Brown  
Mortimer N. Buckner  
W. Randolph Burgess  
Nicholas Murray Butler  
Pierce Butler  
Godfrey Lowell Cabot  
Hugh Cabot  
Samuel Cabot  
George O. Carpenter  
Louis S. Cates  
Harry Chandler  
Morris L. Clothier  
George I. Cochran  
Henry Sloane Coffin  
Lotus D. Coffman  
Karl T. Compton  
James B. Conant  
Charles Allerton Coolidge  
William H. Crocker

Wilbur L. Cross  
Michael J. Curley  
Charles P. Curtis, Jr.  
Arthur W. Cutten  
William H. Danforth  
Josephus Daniels  
Harold Willis Dodds  
Franklin D'Olier  
Thomas E. Donnelley  
Denis J. Dougherty  
Edward D. Duffield  
A. Felix du Pont  
Lammot du Pont  
Pierre S. du Pont  
Cyrus S. Eaton  
Sidney M. Ehrman  
Livingston Farrand  
Mortimer Fleishhacker  
W. Cameron Forbes  
Raymond B. Fosdick  
Glenn Frank  
William Parmer Fuller, Jr.  
Michael J. Gallagher  
Frank E. Gannett  
Robert Garrett  
Thomas S. Gates  
Bancroft Gherardi  
Amadeo P. Giannini  
Walter S. Gifford  
John J. Glennon

Joseph P. Grace  
Joseph D. Grant  
Frank P. Graves  
Edward B. Greene  
Learned Hand  
Edward J. Hanna  
John R. Hardin  
Francis R. Hart  
Charles Hayden  
Patrick Hayes  
Nathan Hayward  
August Heckscher  
Robert C. Hill  
Herbert Hoover  
Timothy Hopkins  
Edward Hopkinson, Jr.  
Henry Horner  
Samuel F. Houston  
Charles Evans Hughes  
Charles Evans Hughes, Jr.  
Robert M. Hutchins  
Henry James  
Frank B. Jewett  
Herbert H. Lehman  
Ira S. Lillick  
Walter Lippmann  
A. Lawrence Lowell  
John R. Macomber  
Cyrus H. McCormick  
Vance C. McCormick  
John T. McNicholas  
Edward Mallinckrodt, Jr.  
William T. Manning  
Theodore Marburg  
Alfred Marling  
Charles H. Mayo  
William J. Mayo  
Jesse H. Metcalf  
Stephen O. Metcalf  
Ben R. Meyer  
Albert G. Milbank  
A. Blanchard Miller  
C. O. G. Miller  
Thomas E. Molloy  
Henry S. Morgan  
George William Mundelein  
Charles Nagel  
John F. Neylan  
William H. O'Connell  
Henry O'Melveny

William C. Osborn  
Francis Parsons  
J. J. Pelley  
Josiah H. Penniman  
George Wharton Pepper  
Thomas N. Perkins  
Gifford Pinchot  
Francis Price  
Redfield Proctor  
Percy R. Pyne, II  
David A. Reed  
Gordon S. Rentschler  
Louis D. Ricketts  
Edward B. Robinette  
Henry M. Robinson  
Elihu Root, Jr.  
Chester H. Rowell  
Arthur P. Rugg  
Edward L. Ryerson, Jr.  
Fred W. Sargent  
Jacob F. Schoellkoepf, Jr.  
Charles M. Schwab  
Albert L. Scott  
Frederic William Scott  
Henry D. Sharpe  
Henry Lee Shattuck  
Paul Shoup  
Alfred P. Sloan, Jr.  
Alfred E. Smith  
Payson Smith  
Albert A. Sprague  
Robert G. Sproul  
Eugene M. Stevens  
Charles A. Stone  
E. T. Stotesbury  
Silas H. Strawn  
John Stuart  
Harold H. Swift  
Gerard Swope  
Myron C. Taylor  
Walter C. Teagle  
Charles C. Teague  
Elihu Thomson  
Ernest F. Tittle  
Clinton W. Toms, Sr.  
Charles Warren  
Thomas J. Watson  
Edwin S. Webster  
George Whitney  
Joseph E. Widener



Albert H. Wiggin  
Roy C. Wilcox  
Daniel Willard

Robert G. Williams  
John P. Wilson  
Samuel Huntington Wolcott

Clarence M. Woolley

The names of the other trustees studied are listed in Exhibit A of the Appendix.

#### TYPES AND SOURCES OF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA UTILIZED

In addition to the names of governing board members, the following data were gathered: (1) occupation, (2) status as to whether occupationally active or retired, (3) date of first appointment to the university governing board, (4) type of governing board membership held, (5) date of birth, (6) place of birth, (7) residence address, (8) business address, (9) marital status, (10) number of children living, (11) education and degrees, (12) political preference, (13) religious affiliation, (14) membership in societies, fraternal organizations, and clubs, (15) civic activities, (16) whether listed in *Who's Who in America*, 1934-1935,<sup>8</sup> (17) whether listed in *Poor's Register of Directors*, 1935,<sup>9</sup> (18) directorships held in business corporations, (19) data on salary and income, where available, (20) miscellaneous information on special affiliations, contributions, etc., and (21) opinions on certain political and social issues.

The university catalogs issued for the academic year 1934-35 were obviously the initial source to be consulted. From these, lists of trustees for the academic year 1934-35 were compiled. Information as to addresses, date of first appointment, and type of board membership was often available in these catalogs also, and when not, university officials courteously supplied it. For other biographical information, it was necessary in most cases to turn to other sources, for universities, as a general practice, gather very little biographical information about their trustees. Such data were obtained chiefly from *Who's Who in America*, 1934-1935 edition. Fifty-eight percent of the 734 members were listed in that publication, mostly in the 1934-1935 edition. Biographical data for many of the remaining 42 percent, as well as additional facts for some of the 58 percent, were sought directly from board members themselves by means of a printed biographical blank mailed with an accompanying explanatory letter.<sup>10</sup> This blank was patterned basically after the one used by *Who's Who in America* in order that the data from the two sources might be as comparable as possible. Before final adoption, it was tried experimentally with board members of certain universities not members of the Association of American Universities.<sup>11</sup> In all, blanks were mailed to 304 board members not listed in *Who's Who in America* and produced biographical statements from 245 additional trustees, or 33 percent of the entire group. Eighty-one per-

cent of the trustees to whom blanks were mailed eventually returned them.<sup>12</sup> Blanks were mailed also to a few persons whose sketches in *Who's Who in America* were incomplete. Of these returns, 7 added substantially to the published biographies. From these two chief biographical sources, sketches were obtained for 92 percent of the trustees studied. *Poor's Register of Directors*, 1935, was an additional important source for information on affiliations with business corporations. This directory listed 334 of the 734 board members studied, or 46 percent of the total, of whom 23 were not in *Who's Who in America* and did not return the biographical blank. The *Salary Directory*<sup>13</sup> was one of the sources consulted for salaries of board members. Other sources utilized were chiefly public records, newspapers, and various other directories, including alumni, city, regional, religious, and social types. In certain cases information was also made available through persons close to several of the institutions studied. The opinion poll used for ascertaining board members' opinions on certain social and political issues is described in Chapter XII. Further details on other sources are given in the chapters dealing with specific findings.

#### COMPLETENESS AND ACCURACY OF BASIC DATA

As a result of these extended efforts and the multiplicity of sources consulted, a high degree of completeness was achieved for many types of biographical information. Some items, such as name, address, and type of board membership held, were secured for all the 734 trusteeships studied. For many other important types of information, the final data were nearly as complete. For example, the occupation of 721 members was found (98 percent), the age of 695 (95 percent), and the length of service of the governing board of 714 (97 percent). This degree of completeness was attained in spite of the handicap that 36 of the 734 members, or 5 percent, were deceased at the time the data were gathered, and that certain others were too ill to provide information. Among the least complete types of information were those on income or salary, data in this class being found for only 41 percent of the total, and those from the public opinion poll, on which usable returns were received from 43 percent of living board members. In view of the difficulties normally expected in the collection of such information even these returns were gratifyingly high.

Various checks were made on the accuracy of the data, particularly those obtained from *Who's Who in America* and from mail returns. Checks included comparison with alumni directories, and comparisons between *Who's Who in America* and biographical blanks returned directly by the persons concerned. Information from the *Salary Directory*

was also checked with public records. All materials agreed closely. The most probable bias is one of occasional egotistical overstatement, for which corrections were made in a few cases when the supporting evidence seemed adequate to establish exaggeration. Aside from this relatively minor bias, the materials used gave strong evidence of validity and accuracy. In cases where conflicting details in alternative sources made selection necessary, preference was given in the following order: (1) information received directly from board members, (2) *Who's Who in America*, (3) other biographical and alumni directories, (4) *Poor's Register of Directors*, and (5) other sources.

The data thus gathered were coded, punched on cards for semi-mechanical sorting,<sup>14</sup> and tabulated in a variety of ways. The results of these analyses are set forth in Chapters VII to XIII, following a series of chapters dealing with background materials.



## CHAPTER IV

### SIZE AND EMINENCE OF THE UNIVERSITIES SELECTED

*The Association of American Universities now includes twenty-seven of the best universities of the country, both public and private—ELLIOTT, CHAMBERS, AND ASHBROOK.<sup>1</sup>*

AS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED, the universities whose governing board members form the subject of this inquiry constituted in 1935 the United States membership of the Association of American Universities. The significance of the composition of these governing boards obviously hinges first on the powers and functions that they exercise and second on the influence of the universities that they govern. The question of powers and functions is dealt with in the following chapter, while this chapter is devoted to a consideration of the size and eminence of the institutions controlled by these boards. Available data pertinent to the following four factors that may be assumed to contribute toward influence are reviewed: (1) size of operations, (2) financial resources, (3) eminence in scholarship and facilities for graduate study, and (4) eminence in achievements of graduates.

#### SIZE OF OPERATIONS

Statistics on size, though in themselves an inadequate measure of greatness, do reveal in some degree the prominence of these 30 universities in American higher education. Table 2 presents percentages indicating the relative size of their faculties and student bodies and the proportion of total academic degrees granted. Since the 30 governing boards studied control 8 additional institutions, these have also been included as a separate subdivision of Table 2, making the total analyzed 38.<sup>2</sup>

In the academic year 1935-36 to which Table 2 applies, these 38 institutions comprised 2.2 percent of the total number of institutions of higher education in the United States,<sup>3</sup> while the 30 governing boards studied probably constituted only about 2 percent of the governing boards of higher education. Nevertheless, they had under their jurisdiction 24 percent of the faculty members, 20 percent of the students in regular session,

50 percent of the graduate students in arts and sciences, and 47 percent of the graduate students in professional schools. They granted 50 percent of all the master's degrees awarded in this country, and 77 percent of the doctor's degrees. Among the 30 universities studied, the nongovernmental universities had a larger number of faculty members than the state universities, but fewer students. Among graduate students, the private institutions also had a larger share of those in the arts and sciences, and a much larger share of those in the professional schools. They also awarded a larger proportion of graduate degrees, especially on the doctoral level. From the totals for both groups, it is obvious that the scope and magnitude of the academic processes under the control of these boards is grossly disproportionate to the approximately 2 percent which they constitute of the boards of the 1,628 institutions of higher education. Their influence in the field of advanced study is particularly significant because of the large proportion of graduate students who become teachers in secondary schools or higher institutions of learning.

#### FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The explanation for the dominance of this small but eminent group of leading institutions of higher education evidently lies partly in their exceptional financial resources. Money can bring many advantages to a university in the way of specialists, laboratories, libraries, publication funds, scholarships, technical assistance, and publicity. In resources for this purpose, these universities have been exceptionally fortunate, as is clear from Table 3 which shows the percentage of receipts, expenditures, and property in higher education controlled by these 30 governing boards in the academic year 1935-36.

In terms of official statistics for the academic year 1935-36, these 30 institutions, together with 8 others controlled by the same governing boards, held property valued at 28.8 percent of the stated financial value of all property of reporting institutions of higher education in the United States. Although these 38 institutions comprised only one-fortieth of the total number of institutions of higher learning, they received 41.7 percent of the income from endowment, 29.8 percent of all private gifts and grants to higher education, 29.3 percent of federal, state, and local appropriations for higher education, 51.8 percent of receipts for the increase of permanent funds, 26.4 percent of receipts from student fees, and 29.7 percent of receipts for other purposes. On the expenditure side of the ledger, this same small proportion of institutions was responsible for more than one-third of total expenditures for resident instruction and nonbudgeted research, more than one-half the total for separately-budgeted, organized

research, almost two-fifths of the total for libraries, and more than one-fifth of the capital outlay. Gifts for additions to endowments went largely to the 16 nongovernmental institutions, as did also income from endowment. In fact, approximately one percent of institutions of higher education in this country received 36.2 percent of the total endowment income. The 16 nongovernmental institutions also excelled in expenditures for instruction, research, and libraries, while state institutions led in expenditures for capital outlay—a reflection, doubtless, of the rapidly expanding student bodies of state institutions, as well as the stimulus of federal public works programs.

The record of gifts to institutions of higher education, when examined in more detail, reveals an even greater concentration of financial resources than Table 3 would suggest. For the school year 1931-32, 26 of the 30 institutions whose boards are analyzed in this study were among the 105 institutions receiving total benefactions of \$100,000 or more, while the corresponding list for 1935-36 includes 27 of these same 30 institutions.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, many of this group occupy prominent positions among the universities receiving exceptionally large total benefactions during these years. In 1931-32, for example, Yale received close to 13 million dollars in gifts; Harvard, approximately 9 millions; Columbia and Chicago, between 4 and 5 millions each; and Johns Hopkins, close to 3 millions. In 1935-36, Chicago received 8 millions; Michigan and Yale, between 4 and 5 millions each; and California and Columbia, between 2 and 3 millions each. In these same years only one institution not among these 30 received over 2 millions in gifts. Of the total of 77 millions received in 1931-32 by the 105 institutions receiving benefactions of \$100,000 or more, 64 percent went to 26 of the 30 institutions whose boards are analyzed in this study.<sup>5</sup> Clearly the boards that control these 30 universities control in many respects a decisive share of the financial resources of American higher education.

#### EMINENCE IN SCHOLARSHIP AND FACILITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDY

These universities are likewise preeminent in the less tangible achievements more directly related to scholarship. Their leadership in this basic aspect of higher education is attested by the remarkable agreement of juries of scholars as to the eminence of these 30 universities in scholarship and facilities for graduate study. In the ranking of 16 leading graduate schools, published by Eells in 1926, and based on jury ratings collected and published by R. M. Hughes, all the 16 judged to be the leading graduate schools were among the 30 institutions selected for the present study.<sup>6</sup> Eight years later Dr. Hughes, as Chairman of the Committee on



Graduate Instruction of the American Council on Education, presented a new and more elaborate report on schools offering adequate facilities for graduate work in one or more of 35 separate fields.<sup>7</sup> Of a total of 233 departments adjudged distinguished by prominent scholars in those fields, 226 were in the 30 institutions covered by the present study, and 3 of the remaining 7, in institutions controlled by these same boards.<sup>8</sup> Thus 229, or over 98 percent of these distinguished graduate departments, were in institutions governed by these 30 boards—a sharp contrast to the 2 percent that these boards constituted of the total number of boards controlling American institutions of higher education. Hughes' committee also presented a longer list of 660 departments judged to have adequate staff and equipment to prepare candidates for the doctorate. Of the 660 so listed, 534 were in the 30 universities studied and 14 others, in institutions governed by the same boards, making a total under the control of these boards of 548 departments, or 83 percent of the total of 660 departments judged suitable for doctoral study.<sup>9</sup> In 1935 Embree reclassified the 1934 report of the Committee of the American Council on Education, added to it data on the basic medical sciences, studied the distribution of starred persons in *American Men of Science*, consulted scholars and appropriate national committees, and then published a ranking of the 11 leading universities based on these combined methods.<sup>10</sup> All these 11 eminent universities were among the 30 chosen for the present study. The rankings of specific universities as reported by both Eells and Embree are given in Table 4.

The number of prominent scientists on the staffs of these universities constitutes further evidence of their scholarly eminence. In his analysis in 1906 of the university positions of the thousand leading men of science, Cattell found 35 colleges and universities to have 5 or more of these leading scientists on the staffs at that time.<sup>11</sup> Of these 35 institutions, all but 7 were among those selected for the present study. Moreover, the 30 universities included on their staffs 91 percent of the 541 distinguished men of science at the 35 institutions. In 1939 Visser published a repetition of this type of study giving in his tabulations data for American universities with a total of 6 or more men starred in the four editions of *American Men of Science* that appeared between the years 1921-38, inclusive.<sup>12</sup> These later figures showed that the clustering of notable scientists was still characteristic of these 30 universities in the late thirties. Another study covering this and related matters, prepared by Hughes for the National Resources Committee, showed similar results.<sup>13</sup>

The findings of Cattell and of Visser for each university included in the present study are given in Table 4. These authors report a further marked tendency toward concentration of scientific talent even within

this circle of the elite. In 1906, for example, with part-time professors and professors emeritus being counted as .5, Harvard had on its staff 66.5 notable scientists; Columbia, 60.0; University of Chicago, 39.0; and Cornell, 33.5. No other institution could then claim over 31 such scientists, and the majority, many fewer. Visser's report in 1939 noted a similar concentration of notable scientists. His highest ranking universities were: Harvard, 69.0 scientists; Columbia, 39.5; University of Chicago, 45.5; and University of California, 35.0. In contrast, other universities even among the select 30 fell below the minimum of 6 covered by Visser's tables. With such a near monopoly of top-rank scientists by a few institutions, the influence of these fortunate few on scientific developments and technological change must be greatly out of proportion to their numbers.

#### EMINENCE IN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF GRADUATES

The achievements of graduates illustrate still another aspect of the influence of these 30 universities on the life of the nation. In several instances notable scientists, as distinguished by starring in *American Men of Science*, have been classified according to the universities where they received their undergraduate or graduate education. Further calculations based on Cattell's study in 1906 of the thousand men of science reveal that 40 percent of such scientists received their bachelor's degree from one of the 30 institutions studied and 58 percent carried on graduate study there.<sup>14</sup> Harvard, Yale, and the University of Michigan ranked at the top of Cattell's list of universities that had granted the highest number of bachelor's degrees to distinguished scientists, while Johns Hopkins, Harvard, and Columbia topped the corresponding list for graduate instruction. Visser later repeated this type of analysis using the 750 men newly starred in the 1927, 1933, and 1938 editions of *American Men of Science*.<sup>15</sup> His findings confirmed the dominance in the training of leading scientists of the 30 universities whose boards form the subject of this study. Visser's tables for the earned doctorate list only the top 16 institutions in this respect, and all 16 were among the 30 included in the present study. Moreover, 69 percent of all those starred in these volumes were found to have received the earned doctoral degree from one or another of these 16 institutions.<sup>16</sup> Harvard alone granted 96 Ph.D. degrees to scientists attaining this academic level; the University of Chicago, 85; and Columbia, 65. Corresponding figures for other universities included in the present study, as well as figures from a later tabulation by Visser of scientists newly starred in 1943, are given in Table 4.

The prominence of these 30 institutions is similar with regard to the education of persons of outstanding achievement in other areas of life.

Prentice and Kunkel have listed the institutions having more than 20 holders of their bachelor's degree cited in the 1928-1929 edition of *Who's Who in America*,<sup>17</sup> of the 33 colleges and universities having 100 or more alumni so listed, 23 were among the 30 institutions chosen for the present study. Forty-five percent of all holders of bachelor's degrees listed in that edition of *Who's Who in America* received this degree from institutions governed by 27 of the boards studied, while 40 percent of those receiving this degree after 1900 received it from 17 universities from among these same 30.<sup>18</sup> Harvard was again at the top of the list for the total period, having granted the bachelor's degree to 1,374 notable persons so listed, while Yale was second with 937, and Princeton, third with 480.

The preeminence of this small group of universities in the education of notable Americans has its counterpart among eminent Americans who have passed away. A study of the twenty-volume *Dictionary of American Biography*, which lists persons having made "original contributions to American civilization," discloses that 55 institutions of higher education had 20 or more alumni listed, totalling 4,988 persons.<sup>19</sup> Of this number, 56 percent were graduates of 14 of the 30 institutions included in this study,<sup>20</sup> these institutions being in general the older ones since this dictionary includes persons who lived in the colonial period. In this list Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, having been founded early, naturally were in the lead.

Similarly, college presidents, a key group in American higher education, have been educated to an important degree by these same leading 30 universities. Warren's study of the presidents of four-year colleges<sup>21</sup> indicates that of the 628 presidents for whom he found data on earned degrees, 310, or almost half, had received their highest earned degree from some one of 17 institutions included among the 30 in the present study.<sup>22</sup> This figure would be even higher if data were available for institutions from which less than 5 of the presidents had received their highest earned degree. In this analysis, Columbia tops the list, having furnished 97 college presidents; Harvard ranks second, with credit for 40; and the University of Chicago, third, with 35. Corresponding figures for other universities appear in Table 4.

A special study in 1936 of Yale graduates serves to illustrate further the educational outreach of a leading university. In that year 50 of Yale's graduates were presidents of American colleges or universities and more than 2,600 were engaged in educational work. Moreover, Yale graduates had contributed in major fashion, as founders or first presidents, to the development of colleges and universities which in 1936 enrolled 125,000 students.<sup>23</sup>

The total picture is thus one of great concentration of power within



the field of higher education, the 30 universities selected for study occupying in most respects a highly central position. It would indeed have been difficult to have selected a group of governing board members in a better strategic position to influence American higher education, and consequently American life, than those whose record is examined in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER V

### POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNING BOARDS

*By whatever name the governing body is known, trustees, regents, or other, it is primarily a body legislative and executive. In it is vested final power—CHARLES F. THWING.<sup>1</sup>*

#### POWERS AND FUNCTIONS LEGALLY GRANTED TO GOVERNING BOARDS

THE IMPORTANCE to the public welfare of the composition of governing boards hinges not only on the eminence of the universities these boards control, but also on the powers and functions they exercise. No special intensive study of the legal provisions for these 30 governing boards was undertaken, but the findings reported by other writers in this area provide a general picture of the powers and functions of governing boards, which is in all probability characteristic of these boards also. As other students have indicated, the term "Board of Trustees" belies their real powers and functions. The term, "Board of Regents," commonly used by state universities, is more truly descriptive.<sup>2</sup> In some states, of which Iowa is one, the State Board of Education is in charge of all tax-supported higher education, as well as of the public school system.

Despite the usual designation of board members as "trustees" and conformance with that tradition in this study, university board members do far more than hold in trust the institution's endowment and property. In the opinion of one board member, the term trustee "is an erroneous designation. The Board itself and its members are *Managers* or *Directors* of the college."<sup>3</sup> The terms of the charters and legislative acts, under the provisions of which these boards were established or now operate, as well as many court decisions, support in large measure this conception of board functions. For example, six years after the founding of Harvard, the General Court (i.e. the legislature) of the Massachusetts Colony created a board to govern this young institution. At its formation in 1642, this board, called "The Board of Overseers," was given "full power and authority to make and establish all such orders, statutes, and constitutions

as they shall see necessary for the instituting, guiding, and furthering of the said College and the several members thereof, from time to time, in piety, morality, and learning."<sup>4</sup> More than three hundred years have passed since that quaint phraseology was used to express the authority and obligation of the governing board of the first institution of higher learning in what is now the United States. Today the direction of institutions of higher learning encompasses wider responsibilities, powers for the execution of which are often explicitly granted to the governing boards. In general, these boards now possess all legal powers necessary for, and incidental to, the operation of institutions of higher learning.<sup>5</sup> The charter of Columbia University serves to illustrate the powers typically granted by law to such boards. It provides:

That the said trustees, and their successors, shall forever hereafter have full power and authority to direct and prescribe the course of study, and the discipline to be observed in the said college, and also to select and appoint by ballot or otherwise, a president of the said college, who shall hold his office during good behaviour; and such professor or professors, tutor or tutors, to assist the president in the government and education of the students belonging to the said college, and such other officer or officers, as to the said trustees shall seem meet, all of whom shall hold their offices during the pleasure of the trustees; *Provided always*, That no such professor, tutor, or other assistant officer shall be trustee.<sup>6</sup>

This charter provides further:

That the said trustees, and their successors, shall have full power and authority to make all ordinances and by-laws which to them shall seem expedient for carrying into effect the designs of their institution; *Provided always*, That such ordinances or by-laws shall not make the religious tenets of any person a condition of admission to any privilege or office in the said college, nor be inconsistent with the constitution and laws of this state, nor with the constitution and laws of the United States.<sup>7</sup>

To an important extent the powers of nongovernmental universities are independent of legislative action. The historic decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Dartmouth College case (1819) held that a charter is a contract which the state cannot modify without consent from the other party to the contract. As a result, the law that the New Hampshire legislature had enacted revising the method of appointment of Dartmouth trustees and establishing Dartmouth as a state university was declared unconstitutional.<sup>8</sup> It follows, therefore, that when powers have been granted to nongovernmental universities by charter, they cannot be modified or rescinded by the state without the consent of the university governing board.

The powers of state universities, in general, are comparable in scope



with those of nongovernmental universities. The Office of Education *Survey of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities* states:

Statutes of all the States have vested general authority over the land-grant colleges [and universities] in the governing boards. The authority thus given includes the performance of all acts necessary to keep the institutions in operation, the care and preservation of their properties, and the government of their financial and educational affairs. Whether specifically stated or implied in the laws, the governing boards have jurisdiction over the administrative and business procedure; the election of a president; the employment and discharge of teachers, officers, and employees; the prescribing of courses of instruction; the fixing of entrance requirements of students; the determining and conferring of appropriate degrees; and the making of rules for the conduct of the students.<sup>9</sup>

Almost without exception in this country, governing boards exercise these powers and functions without the consent of the governed. Neither faculty nor students have power to review or veto board decisions. Moreover faculty and students practically never participate in the selection of trustees, have no power to recall them, and seldom share in their deliberations. According to Kirkpatrick, a close student of the history of university government, this practice of governing a university by means of a board in which the faculty have "no voting voice" is "without parallel outside the North American Continent." In addition to the United States, this practice "has been followed in good part in British America, but in no other portion of the civilized world."<sup>10</sup> Moreover it has not at times been characteristic even of certain major American universities. During Harvard's first 60 years, for example, all teachers were at the same time "fellows" and thus members of the governing board.<sup>11</sup> For eighty years the administration of the University of Virginia was in charge of the faculty and a chairman which the faculty elected in accordance with a plan of self-government instituted by Thomas Jefferson. Among the universities in the United States, the democratic form evidently was retained longest there, but in 1903 the governing board revised the plan of government and in the following year itself elected a president.<sup>12</sup> A few smaller, more experimental colleges still retain an important share of the control in the hands of faculty and students.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the share of the faculty in university government has been waning and ultimate control in the hands of governing boards not elected by students or faculty is now unquestionably the typical form of government of the leading universities covered by this study,<sup>14</sup> as well as of most similar American institutions of lesser eminence.

#### LIMITATIONS ON THE POWERS OF GOVERNING BOARDS

Although legally the power of the governing board is immense both in legislative and executive matters, in actual practice important limitations

exist. For state institutions, one such limitation results from their dependence on the state legislature for financial support. Some state universities, according to their fundamental law, are completely subject to the state legislature, as are also other administrative branches of the state government. Other state universities were created by the state constitution, and consequently are less directly subject to the legislature. In some states, certain officials, such as the state auditor, can operate as a check upon the university governing board. Although all such legal, financial, and administrative limitations are very real, ordinarily they still leave the governing boards with very great power.

Other types of limitations affect the boards of both state and nongovernmental universities. Among these are judicial decisions, the standards of accrediting agencies, and the opinions of alumni, staff, students, pressure groups, and the general public. Often such groups achieve greater influence in university affairs by organizing into alumni associations, student organizations, and faculty groups, such as the American Association of University Professors and the College Section of the American Federation of Teachers. Decisions of boards must also be governed to some extent by considerations of supply and demand similar to those that affect all enterprises, a process well illustrated by the usual rivalry between universities for football players, students, faculty, and other staff. Additional and more subtle limitations are placed on governing boards by interest groups that influence or determine the choice of members, as for example, political groups in the case of state universities, and donors or prospective donors in the case of nongovernmental universities.

Further important limitations on the powers of boards arise in actual practice from the need to delegate powers to the president and to a lesser extent to the faculty. Since members of university governing boards are usually laymen and ordinarily devote only a small portion of their time to university matters, some delegation of powers is inevitable. As one distinguished university board president has explained, the average trustee

does not know much about educational policy, but he knows that he knows not, and in his ignorance, and because he believes it fitting and proper, he largely delegates responsibility for educational policies to the faculty people. They are specialists, and ought to be wiser in education. I hope in doing so he is not too optimistic; sometimes I wonder.<sup>15</sup>

This delegation of powers creates the hierarchical pattern of organization that is practically universal among American institutions of higher education. The usual plan provides for a faculty responsible to a president, who, in turn, is responsible to a governing board. Typically, a governing board is in charge of a single institution, and ordinarily deals with

only one chief executive officer.<sup>16</sup> The general dictum of the delegation of powers, as set forth in a handbook written expressly for board members, is: "Boards should legislate and presidents should execute."<sup>17</sup> In accordance with this concept, the burden of university administration is cared for by the president, the deans, and various other members of the university staff.

The need of the board to delegate authority and the related hierarchical pattern of university government together give rise to the influential office of the presidency, which in itself operates as a further important limitation on the board's power. The university president is, indeed, in a unique position. The board, in order to perform its work wisely, frequently needs appropriate information and expert advice, for which it turns to him, with the result that he typically has considerable influence with the board. With respect to most budget items and the appointment and dismissal of faculty members, his recommendation is commonly equivalent to final action. Thus the functions of the board of trustees commonly consist in the main of legislative decisions on larger issues of policy on which its members are expected to act in the light of data furnished by the president and specialists in the fields concerned.

While the board's need to delegate power and its dependence on the president for information and counsel thus confer a significant measure of power on various university officials, this power is typically exercised at the specific authorization of the board, at times stated in writing, and is subject to revocation. In some respects the delegation of powers extends to the faculty, and at time also to the students.<sup>18</sup> However, the faculty members usually have little or no opportunity to participate in the selection of the president and are commonly omitted, likewise, from participation in the final steps of budget-making and other basic decisions. In consequence, their power to influence fundamental policies is limited and a noticeable literature of protest has accumulated.<sup>19</sup> From this literature and other evidence, it would appear that governing boards are not limited to any important degree by the delegation of powers to faculty below the administrative level and retain final control even of the actions of the president.

#### MAJOR CHANNELS OF BOARD INFLUENCE

In spite of these various practical limitations within which boards must function, board members still hold the powers necessary for the effective control of the major aspects of university organization and policy. Chief among these are their direct responsibilities both for selecting the university president and for continuing him in office. Through the type and quality of president chosen, they are in a position to influence funda-



mentally the entire outlook, trend, and tenor of the university. The power to select the president is, moreover, a power frequently exercised, for the turnover rate in college presidencies is high<sup>20</sup>—in fact much higher than professional opinion would recommend.<sup>21</sup> The reasons for these frequent changes are not fully known. Obviously the demands upon a person in that office are difficult to meet. With due allowance for the inherent difficulties in selection and in meeting expectations, the lack of permanence in these positions suggests, nevertheless, two basic questions: Do the boards exercise their power to select the president with sufficient wisdom? Do basic differences between presidents, chosen to function as educators, and their boards, composed predominantly of business men, create at times irresolvable conflicts? This study cannot answer these questions, but it is perhaps significant that Palmer has reported that "conflicts between the president and his board of trustees over fundamental educational policies and practices are not infrequently found to be factors contributing to changes in presidencies."<sup>22</sup> In addition to the power to select the president and to dismiss him or retire him, boards usually hold also the power of veto over his proposals for university policies, for staff appointments, for use of university funds or property, and for special projects.

The second major key to the effective control of the university by the board is the board's power to approve or veto the president's recommendations as to the appointment, promotion, transfer, demotion, or dismissal of members of the staff.<sup>23</sup> Since the exercise of this power usually appears perfunctory and independent board action or vetoes are infrequent, the true strength arising from this power is easily overlooked. The original process of selection of candidates ordinarily rules out types of persons who, in the opinion of the president and deans, are, or show likelihood of becoming, unsatisfactory to the board. After appointment, staff members usually conduct themselves continually in a manner known to be acceptable to their superior officers, and in turn, to the governing board. Without conscious reflection, evaluation, or challenge, many faculty members easily achieve conformity to the desired pattern, as well as agreement with the basic assumptions of superior officers, and an acceptable approach to social issues. So unaware are they often of the process that they remind one of certain school superintendents who reported that they had no material pressures exerted upon them—not even moderate ones.<sup>24</sup> In this manner great and complex universities operate with relatively few ukases, but one should not, therefore, be deceived as to the source of the directing power. In Flexner's view:

For the most part the immediate and direct influence of the trustees, after they have chosen the president is . . . rare and slight; their indirect and, I believe,

largely unconscious influence may be and often is, however, considerable. . . . In the social and economic realms they create an atmosphere of timidity which is not without effect in initial appointments and in promotions.<sup>25</sup>

The reliance on board members for the solicitation of funds from state legislatures or private donors and their control of decisions as to the distribution of university funds constitute other important sources of their power. While in these fields their dependence on the recommendations of the executive again is often great, they nevertheless hold final power to encourage various departments or divisions of the university with liberal funds, or to reduce their effectiveness with inadequate funds, or to kill them entirely by the complete withdrawal or denial of funds. Their role in relation to special projects, research, and university property is similarly decisive even though inconspicuous.<sup>26</sup>

The ultimate consequences of the manner in which board members exercise their combined powers and functions, both actual and legal, are difficult to overestimate. Raymond M. Hughes, President Emeritus of Iowa State College, has expressed his judgment of trustee influence as follows:

The ideals and character of the faculties of these institutions, the quality and inspiration of the teaching, their adaptation to the current needs of society, their general efficiency, and their adequate support depend very largely on the trustees. . . . No public trust today is more important than the trusteeship of American colleges and universities.<sup>27</sup>

The qualifications recommended for those who are to exercise these responsibilities of fundamental importance to higher education are reviewed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VI

# QUALIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR UNIVERSITY GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*Only forceful and forward-looking persons, representative of the best of the dynamic citizenship of their generation, should be eligible for membership,—men and women who are recognized successes in their own fields of activity, who comprehend the meaning of other kinds of success than their own, who are not mastered by any narrow partisan group or by any political party, who are capable of regarding their trusteeship as the highest order of civic service, and, above all, who are able and willing to give freely an amount of time sufficient to enable them to know and to understand the immediate activities and the ultimate aspirations of the institutions of which they are a part—EDWARD C. ELLIOTT.<sup>1</sup>*

**I**F TRUSTEES WIELD such decisive powers in the affairs of these eminent universities, what then should be their qualifications for these critical responsibilities? To provide a basis for a later appraisal of the findings on actual board composition, this chapter is devoted to a review of the qualifications suggested by students of higher education or prescribed in basic university laws and charters. Those that relate to personality and ideals, occupation, wealth and income, age, sex, religion, politics, education, residence, and family connections are considered in this order.

### PERSONALITY AND IDEALS

In the literature on higher education, discussions of qualifications for membership on university governing boards have been neither intensive nor definitive. Many of the recommendations that have appeared have emphasized mainly personality and related intellectual and emotional attributes of a type that lend themselves very poorly to statistical comparisons with actual board composition. On the other hand, pertinent sections of basic charters and legislation have been confined mainly to more tangible specifications. Ashbrook's tabulation of the chief qualifications for university board members recommended in higher education surveys and writings of university trustees provides a useful introduction to thought on personality qualifications. Heading his list is "absence of political or other extraneous influence," indicated as a chief qualification



in 4 of the 12 sources analyzed.<sup>2</sup> "Understanding of history and ideals of the institution" and "ability to maintain public confidence" tied for second place, each having been indicated as a chief qualification in 3 of the 12 sources. Two writers listed "sound judgment." Only one writer is reported by Ashbrook to have mentioned "a prophetic view"; one, "breadth of outlook"; and one, "vision."<sup>3</sup> Ashbrook also interviewed a number of trustees and found that when questioned, they emphasized the importance to good trusteeship of "interest in the institution; interest in the particular things the institution stands for; and interest in education, or in higher education." "Good judgment" and "good business sense" were also commonly mentioned.<sup>4</sup> More recently, another writer on the subject, Charles F. Thwing, has included such attributes as "intellectual comprehensiveness," "interpretive mindedness," "conciliatoriness," "emotional steadiness," and "progressiveness."<sup>5</sup> Still other traits have been emphasized by Hughes, who wrote:

Real devotion to the cause of education, profound concern for the public good, sterling integrity, courage to face pressure, political and otherwise, fearlessly—these qualities combined with high intelligence and some knowledge of higher education should be prerequisites to the consideration of a man or woman for appointment.<sup>6</sup>

In a critical evaluation of the comments of others, Ashbrook stated:

Two qualities which seem most essential have not been sufficiently stressed by the writers whose works are quoted. One such quality is the ability and intention to further the integration of the factors inside and outside the institution. Another quality is the possession of the viewpoint that the social order and its institutions must constantly change. No amount of professional leadership on the part of the line officers will avail to keep the institution serving the social order if the board members possess a static viewpoint.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps Chambers also had that latter point in mind when he later wrote:

Let it be remembered, however, that a governing board properly includes representatives of different temperaments. Often the presence of one restless firebrand among a group of more complacent spirits may be salutary. Higher education would not suffer if a few more Tom Paines and Patrick Henrys were judiciously distributed among boards of trustees.<sup>8</sup>

Certainly the point of view which a person takes with regard to the social order is basic to his functioning as a university governing board member. To the attributes already mentioned the present author would add three of fundamental importance, viz.: (1) adherence to the ideas, beliefs, and practices of democracy, (2) competence in cultivating a democratic social orientation for higher education, and (3) a strong motivation to promote science and scholarship. If American universities are to fulfill adequately their great responsibility and opportunity in a society devel-

oped increasingly in a framework of democracy, science, and scholarship, a high order of statesmanship in these respects should become a *sine qua non* for university trustees.

#### OCCUPATION

In contrast to the legal silence on character and personality qualifications, the basic laws and charters of universities do in some cases prescribe occupational requirements for trustees.<sup>9</sup> For example, a legal provision designating the holder of a specified office as a university trustee *ex officio* constitutes, in reality, an occupational requirement. Most frequently, college presidents and state governors are placed on boards in an *ex officio* capacity,<sup>10</sup> while occasionally the list of such members is considerably more elaborate. In the case of the Cornell board, the president of the university, the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the assembly, the commissioner of education, the commissioner of agriculture, and the president of the state agricultural society—all are legally designated *ex officio* members.<sup>11</sup> Formal occupational requirements of other types are less frequent and less specific. The Wisconsin statutes have required that two members of the board must be farmers and two must be engaged in manual trades, while the Cornell board must include a representative of the State Grange.<sup>12</sup> A number of land-grant colleges make similar provision for the inclusion of farm representatives on their college boards, and very occasionally, other occupations are mentioned. One land-grant college requires the selection of a trustee from among its foremost mechanics graduates, while another requires that two trustees be from a manufacturing industry.<sup>13</sup> The obvious intent of such legal specifications is to assure representation for certain groups whose interests are presumed to be vitally affected. Still another type of occupational requirement is that for Catholic University which specifies that its board shall consist of the Cardinals and Archbishops of the United States, and 10 bishops, 10 priests, and 10 laymen.<sup>14</sup> Other occupational specifications take a negative form, as for example the charter for Columbia University, which requires that no "professor, tutor, or other assistant officer shall be a trustee."<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Massachusetts Institute of Technology excludes professors, teachers, and lecturers from board membership.<sup>16</sup> The question might be raised whether such restrictions originate in a wish to exclude faculty from participation in policy decisions. In spite of these various specific legal provisions, however, wide latitude is usually permitted in the occupational affiliations of university board members.

Opinion of those who are not lawmakers is sharply divided as to the values of various types of occupational experience as background for board functions. Orthodox students of the subject have stressed the im-

portance of securing trustees with a record of outstanding success and achievement, men with wide public contacts and influence, who are able to win and maintain public confidence in the university. The value of persons accustomed to large business problems and budgets has also been stressed, such men being thought less prone to insist on unreasonable, petty economies to the detriment of the institution governed. The need for sufficient time for necessary university duties has also been emphasized.<sup>17</sup> Often a materialistic desire for free access to special professional skills among board members is also evident. On the basis of his interviews, Ashbrook concluded:

In addition to the mental attitudes and mental acumen desired of prospective trustees, certain material abilities are often wanted. They are: Ability to give money to the institution; to get money for the institution, or to save money for the institution through the donation of special skills or professional abilities. Financial ability and expertness at handling securities and caring for the fiscal interests of the institution is much prized. It is often thought desirable to have a lawyer on the board to handle legal cases without cost to the institution, or to have a real estate broker who can assist in getting proper value in land transactions. Apparently, insurance agents, furniture salesmen, building material dealers, and any other persons who can assist in getting the utmost out of limited funds are esteemed as trustees by the more impecunious institutions.<sup>18</sup>

Burton's findings suggest the presence of a similar motivation for selections for boards below the college level. Of 100 replies he received from boards of control of independent schools, 24 boards replied that they always sought to have lawyers represented; 20 similarly sought to include doctors; 18, educators; 8, bankers; 7, businessmen; 5, ministers; one, civil officials; and one, engineers.<sup>19</sup> Certain authorities, again referring to boards of education below the university level, have been similarly specific as to the occupations believed to furnish good or poor board members. Chancellor, for example, recommended in 1904 that the following types of persons make good board members:

1. Manufacturers accustomed to dealing with bodies of men and with important business interests. . . .
2. Merchants, contractors, bankers, and other men of large affairs. . . .
3. Physicians, if in successful practice. . . .
4. College graduates in any walk in life who are successful in their own affairs.  
     . . . .<sup>20</sup>

Among those not recommended by Chancellor were the following:

1. Inexperienced young men, whatever be their calling.
2. Unsuccessful men.
3. Old men retired from business.
4. Politicians.
5. Newspaper men.



6. Uneducated and unlearned men.
7. Men in subordinate business positions."

In 1916, 1922, and 1929, in three editions of a widely read book on public school administration, Cubberley made an almost identical separation of occupations favored or disapproved as sources of prospective board members, the basis of selection by both writers being the probable relative efficiency of persons from various occupations in handling an institution's business affairs.<sup>22</sup> Somewhat more recently, McConn has added qualified support to this school of thought. In *College or Kindergarten?* he said, "if we are to have any kind of lay board, I think we cannot do better than go ahead with our well-to-do business men."<sup>23</sup>

Emphasis in the literature on the less tangible values that can be contributed by scientists and creative artists on governing boards is much more unusual. Hibbard's recommendation that the board of a mythical Utopia College consist of "three educators (not pedagogues) of National reputation, three creative workers in the field of fine arts, three men of recognized business capacity, and five leading scientists"<sup>24</sup> is most exceptional.

In similar contrast with traditional views of the high worth of business men for this function, a small but notable literature has appeared protesting the dominance of business men on educational boards. Prominent among these critics was the economic theorist, Thorstein Veblen, renowned for his keen analysis of the effects of a changing technology on the modes of thought and action of the workers involved. With masterful irony, Veblen expounded his theory that the workaday habits of mind, interests, training, experience, spirit, and methods of successful business men are inevitably incompatible with the objectives and processes of higher learning and that as a result the ends of higher education are defeated when such men are placed in control. Chambers has summarized this point in the following words:

The type of educational policy-making which is properly entrusted to lay boards is by no means a responsibility identical with that of the management of private commercial or financial corporations operated for profit. Often successful business men either fail to understand or wilfully ignore the distinctions.<sup>25</sup>

Veblen recommended that both governing boards and college presidencies as now known be abolished and that in their place be substituted a university administration originating from, and standing in a service relation to, the university faculty and research staff.<sup>26</sup>

More bitter and extreme is the interpretation presented by Upton Sinclair, author of that famous diatribe on American higher education, *The Goose-Step*. In this volume, Sinclair has illustrated at length his the-

sis that our present educational system operates not as a "public service" furthering "the welfare of mankind," but rather as "an instrument of special privilege" designed "to keep America capitalist."<sup>27</sup> In his judgment, interlocking directorates have been purposely devised to place university control in the hands of executives of big industry and finance, who in turn represent "class greed and selfishness" based on economic privilege.<sup>28</sup> Likewise, Ferdinand Lundberg, in his controversial book, *America's 60 Families*, contends that the identities of the trustees of the leading privately endowed universities—"most of whom are men engaged in pecuniary pursuits as deputies of great fortunes or are in person the ruling heads of the great fortunes"—support the thesis that "these schools are adjuncts, or departments, of the big corporations and banks, and are more or less openly operated as such."<sup>29</sup>

In less accusatory words, each of the authors of the several research monographs on the composition of university governing boards also has expressed concern over the preponderance of business men on these boards.<sup>30</sup> Of these, George S. Counts has stated his position most fully with regard to both university boards and public school boards. Basic to Counts' position are two tenets: (1) that "no one can transcend the limits set by his own experience," and (2) that "the basic service which the board renders society is the formulation of general educational policy."<sup>31</sup> His conclusions and proposed remedy were phrased, in part, as follows:

The criterion of personal competence is not enough. To permit one class or element to legislate for another would seem to be dangerous. Such a practice would open the way to exploitation of the most grievous type. . . .

A dominant class is a privileged class, a class that is favored by the existing social arrangement. It therefore tends to be conservative, to exaggerate the merits of the prevailing order, and to fear any agitation favoring fundamental changes in the social structure. It represents the past rather than the future. . . . To the degree, therefore, that the school is under the control of these forces, however benevolent they may appear, the chances are that its face will be turned toward the past. Its function will be defensive and conservative rather than creative and progressive. . . .<sup>32</sup>

Why, therefore, should not the more important interests be recognized frankly and be given membership on the board of education? This would relieve the board from any flagrant class or sectarian bias.<sup>33</sup>

McGrath, another investigator of board composition, believed that academic freedom was the basic issue involved in the dominance of leaders of big business on university boards. After a review of the arguments on both sides of the question, he concluded:

If the present control in the main permits and encourages the unrestrained pursuit of the truth then it should be continued. If, on the other hand, trustees permit their personal interests and social philosophy to pervert the proper purposes of

American colleges and universities, then the character of such boards must be altered.<sup>34</sup>

Many other writers also have discussed the dangers or disadvantages of a preponderance of business men on university governing boards, although often in a more limited and circumscribed fashion. Among these are Stephen P. Duggan, Harold J. Laski, James McKeen Cattell, J. E. Kirkpatrick, Jesse H. Newlon, Jerome Davis, Ernest H. Lindley, William A. Ashbrook, Charles F. Thwing, Charles W. Eliot, and a number of labor spokesmen.<sup>35</sup> Still others have made statements in general opposition to extraneous influences and pressures that could be construed to have occupational implications, but a political interpretation is the more usual.

#### WEALTH AND INCOME

In contrast to occupational requirements, wealth and income qualifications for board membership are seemingly never embodied in laws or charters and are not often directly referred to in the literature. Nevertheless, their existence in practice may be inferred from frequent references to the importance of choosing "successful" men, occupational achievement and distinction presumably being measured largely in pecuniary terms. Commonly, it is alleged that trustees are selected from among persons of wealth or their representatives with a view to encouraging bequests to the university, and that such men are sometimes retained long after their period of useful activity has passed in order that hoped-for bequests may be realized.<sup>36</sup> In response to a questionnaire on qualifications sought in trustees, one college replied frankly that they sought "men of means who can supply help and who know where funds may reasonably be found."<sup>37</sup> Probably this motivation is more general than is admitted. Hughes states without qualification that "in private institutions, members are often appointed because of their wealth, their prominence, or their supposed influence in securing money for the institution."<sup>38</sup> Several writers have indicated that such hopes are often not realized.<sup>39</sup> Certain more radical writers have maintained further that, in return for substantial contributions to endowments, wealthy board members have been permitted to dictate the social orientation, policies, and direction of higher education.<sup>40</sup> Actual facts as to the functioning of income qualifications remain largely unavailable; some persons doubtless would charge that they have been intentionally suppressed because of their possible adverse effect on public relations.

#### AGE

According to Elliott, Chambers, and Ashbrook, "the minimum age of twenty-one is impliedly universal, but a higher minimum is seldom set.



On the governing boards of one or two state institutions the minimum age is twenty-five years."<sup>41</sup> No legal or charter provisions establishing an upper age limit for the trustees of the 30 universities studied are known to the author. On the contrary, the opposite of age restriction—legal provision for life terms—is the frequent pattern. Some or all of the board members of Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Pennsylvania, and Catholic University hold office for life.<sup>42</sup> On still other boards, tradition favors repeated re-elections that eventually result in the equivalent of life terms. But whether legal or traditional, life terms, in these times of lengthening life-span, automatically assure that board members often will be of advanced years. A standard retirement policy for trustees would avoid this result, but such policies are infrequent, the University of Chicago plan, adopted in 1930, being distinctly exceptional. Under the Chicago regulations, members of the governing board retire from active status at the age of 70 and become honorary trustees, having the right to attend meetings and participate, as well as to serve on standing committees, but not the privilege of voting or holding office.<sup>43</sup> The need for such a plan has been recognized also by two major foundations, the Rockefeller Foundation and the General Education Board, both of which recently adopted a policy of retiring trustees at the age of 65.<sup>44</sup>

In so far as they have expressed judgment, authorities on higher education appear to agree that a large number of old men on governing boards handicaps progress.<sup>45</sup> In 1935, Charles F. Thwing wrote:

To secure members of this progressive type, it is well to elect men when they are young. The typical trustee board is composed of members too old. Seldom should an old man be chosen. If a board is subject to constant renewal by an automatic process after a service of three or five years, men of any age may fittingly be elected; but if the place is regarded as permanent, only those who have not passed beyond mature middle life are to be selected.<sup>46</sup>

Likewise, Ashbrook summarized his judgment as follows:

The program of any institution governed chiefly by old men is almost certain to be rather conservative. These considerations indicate that it should be easier to keep an institution serving its proper function with younger men at the helm.<sup>47</sup>

The following point of view of Hughes on age composition is similar:

In most boards there are too many old men. The average age of the members of a given board is very often too high. It would seem desirable to keep the average age between 50 and 60. It would also seem desirable that no member should serve beyond the age of 70 years. There should certainly be a substantial number of members between 30 and 50 on these boards.

It seems more important that the board should be young enough to sense the needs of the people they represent and guide the changing institutions to their

largest service, rather than that a large majority of aged men should maintain policies unchanged.<sup>48</sup>

These statements are typical of a point of view widely held. Even the conservative William E. Chancellor listed "old men retired from business" as undesirable material for board membership.<sup>49</sup>

#### SEX

The only legal sex requirement known to the author for any of the 30 boards studied is that which specifies that at least 10 of the 100 members of the University of North Carolina board must be women.<sup>50</sup> A similar provision that 2 members of the University of Wisconsin board must be women<sup>51</sup> was eliminated from the statutes in 1939. Although a few institutions have recognized the special interests of women through the creation of an advisory board of women,<sup>52</sup> no evidence was discovered during the present study to indicate the existence of such an advisory board for any of the 30 institutions studied. Comments on the merits of women as board members have also been limited. A few traditional writers have expressed disapproval of women for this responsibility,<sup>53</sup> while Counts, on the other hand, referred critically to the "severe discrimination" against women as members of boards of education of various types.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, Reeves and Russell have recommended that "in any college admitting women students it would appear advisable to provide representation of this important group of interests on the board of trustees."<sup>55</sup> In general, however, sex qualifications have received little discussion.

#### RELIGION

Privately controlled universities, when founded or supported by a religious denomination, sometimes are required by charter to have governing boards of a specific religious composition. Three-fifths of the board members of the University of Chicago, for example, must be members of Christian churches; a majority of this three-fifths must be Baptist; and members of no other denomination may at any time exceed the number of Baptists.<sup>56</sup> A majority of board members of Northwestern University must be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Similarly, the Catholic University board must be composed of the Cardinals and Archbishops of the United States, and 10 bishops, 10 priests, and 10 laymen. Until amended in 1942, the Brown University bicameral board also was required to contain 30 Baptists, 5 Quakers, 5 Episcopalians, and 4 Congregationalists.<sup>57</sup> Such requirements are obviously designed to give dominance to a particular religious group having a special connection with the institution. Occasionally universities operate under requirements with an

opposite objective. The Cornell board, for example, may not have a majority of any one religious sect or of no religious sect.<sup>58</sup> Such occasional references to religious qualifications as are found in the literature likewise show a similar divergence. Persons concerned primarily with the welfare of denominational colleges and universities point out the importance of board members sympathetic with the ideals for which the institution stands,<sup>59</sup> while those concerned primarily with nondenominational institutions at times indicate the need either for diversity of religious representation or of selections made irrespective of denominational affiliation.

#### POLITICS

Legal and charter requirements do not usually place restrictions on the political affiliations of board members although occasionally provision is made for representation of both major parties.<sup>60</sup> For certain boards the political composition is affected by the legal provisions for ex officio membership for various state officials, such as the governor, and by the requirement that certain board members be selected by the governor or elected by popular vote.<sup>61</sup> That political considerations often affect board selections in such cases is obvious. In fact, these methods of selection are sometimes criticized for this reason. Discussions of political qualifications by authorities on higher education are confined in the main to generalized statements opposing political influence in selection.<sup>62</sup> Chambers, however, was somewhat more specific when he wrote: "It is quite obvious that one who has long been an active partisan in local politics is likely to have become committed to viewpoints which are incompatible with good service on a university governing board."<sup>63</sup>

#### EDUCATION

The basic laws and charters for universities have not attempted to specify educational requirements for board members.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, indirect, though effective requirements of this type are imposed through the provisions of various laws and charters for the election or nomination of certain trustees by alumni. Since in practice trustees nominated or elected by alumni are regularly alumni themselves of the institution in question, this method of selection has the effect of making previous attendance at a given university a prerequisite for the attainment of certain trusteeships.

Criteria as to the type of educational background suitable for governing board members have been inadequately formulated. Writers in the field of higher education commonly have expressed the opinion that those in control of universities should themselves in most instances have had



the experience of higher education. Zook, Coffman, and Mann have amplified the value of such educational background as follows:

They [board members] should usually be men of some educational attainment, whose experience has been broad and deep enough to give them definite conceptions of the purposes of higher education and the necessary equipment and facilities to accomplish the desired ends.<sup>65</sup>

Occasionally such related attitudes as "an enthusiastic and intelligent interest in the cause of higher education" are stressed.<sup>66</sup> McConn has suggested requiring that board members elected as alumni representatives must have had an honor record scholastically while in college, a proposal he justified on the grounds that since a real college is "devoted primarily to scholarship," "only those who have shown marked devotion to scholarship should participate in its government."<sup>67</sup> In general, remarkably little effort has been devoted to examining the role of educational background in the determination by boards of basic educational issues. Usually a college education as a proposed qualification is stated without elaboration, reservation, or challenge. Counts' view as to the possibilities of antidemocratic bias resulting from the selective character of higher education is most uncommon in the literature. In speaking of boards of education of all types, he declares:

Moreover, so long as formal education at the upper levels remains selective, the graduates of the higher institutions will not only tend to exhibit alike the stamp of the schools but also tend to engage in the same narrow group of occupations and thus to form an educational class, a class apart from the masses. Their interests will consequently appear to conflict with the interests of the great majority of the people, and they will be tempted to defend their own interests in the development of school programs.<sup>68</sup>

#### RESIDENCE

In contrast to educational requirements, the geographic areas from which trustees are to be selected are often prescribed in the basic laws and charters of universities. For instance, 8 of the trustees of Princeton must be inhabitants of New Jersey, and 3 members of the Northwestern board must be residents of Illinois. The boards of the Universities of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nebraska must contain one trustee from each district in the state, the areas usually being defined in terms of congressional districts.<sup>69</sup> Indiana University may not have more than one trustee from any one county with the exception of the county in which it is located, from which there may be two members.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, not more than one trustee from any congressional district may be appointed to the University of Missouri board.<sup>71</sup> In contrast to these detailed legal specifications, the comments of authorities give singularly little attention to resi-

dential qualifications and their possible influence on board policy. Occasionally it is noted briefly that trustees should be geographically distributed, or that some should represent the locality in the immediate vicinity of the university, or that appointments should be made irrespective of sectional considerations. Possibly such more important matters as urban-rural orientation and familiarity with state or regional needs are given greater consideration in actual selections than the widespread silence on these issues would suggest.

#### FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Finally, qualifications for board membership conceivably might be framed also in terms of family connections. As far as the author is aware, however, a kinship relation has been made a formal legal requirement for only one trustee of only one of the universities studied, namely Cornell, which is required to have on its board the eldest male descendent of Ezra Cornell.<sup>72</sup> Likewise, the merits of specific blood or marriage ties as a qualification for board membership have seldom been discussed by students of higher education. On the other hand, certain critics of board composition, such as Lundberg and Sinclair, have been outspoken in their denunciation of the practice of selecting for trustees members of the families of great wealth, for they fear the consequences when the direct power that inheres in governing board membership is thus handed to "America's 60 Families."<sup>73</sup> That at times kinship ties with great fortunes have been given weight in the selection of trustees would seem obvious from a perusal of the names of the 734 trustees studied.<sup>74</sup> Doubtless, some authorities could be found who would justify this practice on the grounds of its prestige value to the university, the economic support it encourages, and its contribution to enhanced public confidence in a society in which wealth is held in great esteem, but appointments primarily for family reasons certainly would not receive the endorsement of the better scholars of higher education.

No possible fusion of these varying and sometimes sharply divided points of view on qualifications for board membership can create an objective, scientifically determined, and final yardstick with which to measure and judge board composition as it exists in practice. Basic to a decision between conflicting opinions is one's own philosophic frame of reference and one's related judgments as to the purposes, values, and ends of higher education. Necessarily, each reader must fashion his own yardstick and apply it to the task of appraising the facts of actual board composition as revealed in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER VII

### OCCUPATIONS OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*With the development of our industrial civilization, the control of education has passed from the ministry. This shift of power from clergy to laymen is one of the most significant changes which have affected American education in the course of a century. This change, along with the shift of power from the farm to the city, marks the birth of a new civilization, a civilization dominated by the interests and ideals of industry, commerce, and finance—GEORGE S. COUNTS.<sup>1</sup>*

#### IMPORTANCE OF OCCUPATIONS OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

FEW WOULD DENY that a person's occupation is a basic factor in his life pattern. The ways in which a job affects the worker are multitudinous. It determines his standards of income and expenditure. It selects his associates during working hours, and often those for his leisure hours as well. It sets the standards of ability and education of his co-workers, determines his working environment, and influences his family's choice of neighborhood and school. Commonly, a person derives not only his major income from his job, but also many of his hopes, fears, ideas, and ideals. The job can even nullify some of the effects of his schooling, as many a distinguished professor will testify from contacts with his former students. The similarity of points of view of persons in like occupations has often been observed, as for example in the returns from polls of public opinion. Although neither complete nor automatic, the differentiation of personality patterns along occupational lines is a significant and well recognized result of specialization in modern civilization.

Undoubtedly, university governing board members are among those influenced by their means of livelihood. With few exceptions they probably spend the most important share of their waking time, interest, and effort on their occupations. In comparison, the time they can give to university matters must necessarily be minor. When these men do gather in the board room of the university, they cannot leave their occupations, with all the associated experiences, feelings, interests, prejudices, and



aspirations, on the hatrack outside the door. The banker brings to the conference table his economics; the minister, his theology; the manufacturer, his labor union policy. This inevitable influence of a person's occupation on his life outlook appears to be recognized to some extent in the selection of trustees. For example, the Harvard Alumni Association's standing committee for the nomination of governing board members has distributed annually for many years, along with the ballots, a statement of the occupational distribution of continuing members of the board, as well as occupational information regarding each candidate. Likewise, the charters of many universities provide in some fashion for the inclusion of persons from several different vocations, as has been indicated in the preceding chapter. The present chapter outlines the occupations of the 734 trustees studied. Later chapters present evidence of further selectivity within these occupations and other data suggestive of the social and economic orientation of these key figures in American higher education.

#### COLLECTION OF OCCUPATIONAL DATA AND METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Considerable care was exercised in the collection and classification of the vocational data for these board members. In hundreds of cases the occupation stated in *Who's Who in America* or on the biographical sheets filled in by the trustees themselves was checked with statements of occupation in alumni directories, professional directories, city directories, and similar sources.<sup>2</sup> For the 46 percent of the trustees listed in *Poor's Register of Directors* a check was made also with this source. Still a further comparison was made with data gathered by the American Association of University Professors respecting the vocations of governing board members.<sup>3</sup> When individuals indicated that they had two occupations, ordinarily the one first stated was used.<sup>4</sup> In a few cases where objective evidence revealed an egotistical overstatement of occupation, a suitable correction was made. As a result of this intensive search, occupational information was found for 98.2 percent of the 734 trustees. Most of the 13 for whom occupational information could not be located were members of state university boards.

In the basic classification of the occupational data, the procedures used by the United States Bureau of the Census were applied in order to permit comparison with census occupational totals for the United States, particularly summaries following a social-economic classification.<sup>5</sup> Various supplementary reclassifications were also undertaken to secure groupings reasonably comparable with those used in certain other studies,<sup>6</sup> such as that of Counts on boards of education published in 1927,<sup>7</sup> those of Lindeman and Coffman on foundation boards,<sup>8</sup> and the occupational

analysis of *Who's Who in America*, 1934-1935.<sup>9</sup> In spite of these efforts, exact comparability between these studies was not attainable because of lack of certainty as to category definitions of other writers, because of differences in institutions and dates, and because of lack of knowledge of the composition of the "unknown" categories. Likewise, in some tables, only certain groups within the present study are used in comparisons. For example, trustees of foundations are compared only with board members of nongovernmental universities, and trustees studied by Counts, only with male members of state university boards. With a few exceptions, statistical comparisons with the findings of Clark, Calhoun, and Leighton are not feasible.<sup>10</sup>

The findings of these several analyses are presented in Tables 5 through 12. For the convenience of the reader, the textual discussion of the findings is organized around specific occupations.

#### PROPRIETORS, MANAGERS, AND OFFICIALS

Membership on the boards of these 30 universities proved to be divided about equally between the professions on the one hand, and proprietors, managers, and officials on the other. The latter were predominantly engaged in business and finance. The details for the various specific business and related occupations are reviewed first; these are followed by facts for the various professions. At the close of the chapter, inclusive figures for business and the professions as a whole are presented. In the main, comments reflecting the author's judgment as to the social implications of the findings are reserved for the final chapter.

#### *Bankers, Brokers, and Financiers*

Within the business group, bankers, brokers, and financiers formed one of the two largest subgroups, constituting in all 15.4 percent of the 734 trustees studied. In disproportionately large numbers, bankers from the great nationally prominent banks had been selected. This occupational group was about twice as numerous relatively on nongovernmental university boards as on state boards. Each of the 16 private university boards studied included at least one banker, broker, or financier; in fact, men from these financial vocations constituted 10 percent or more of the membership of 14 of these 16 boards. California Institute of Technology, with 39 percent from this occupation, ranked highest in this respect. In contrast to these nongovernmental universities, 5 of the 14 state university boards included no bankers at all, while the average for these state institutions was less than 10 percent.

In the perspective provided by comparisons with other groups, the high

proportion of bankers, especially on private university boards, is even more striking. For example, the percentage of bankers on nongovernmental boards is substantially higher than on the foundation boards studied by Lindeman and Coffman—and this in spite of the obvious need of foundations for counsel in the handling of large investments, a need that would seem at least equal to that of private universities. Published data do not permit a specific comparison with the proportion of bankers selected for *Who's Who in America*, 1934-1935, but it is significant that all representatives of trade, industry, and business combined formed hardly a higher percent of all eminent persons listed in that directory than did the banking group alone on nongovernmental university boards. More specific comparison is possible with the adult working population of the country; in this case the banking group is found to be 53 times as prominent numerically on these 30 boards as among the general working population.

Significant also is the phenomenal rise of bankers in board membership during the last three-quarters of a century. McGrath reported that on the nongovernmental boards that he studied bankers rose from 4.6 percent in 1860 to 20.3 percent in 1930. Likewise, on the state boards he analyzed, bankers increased from 4.4 percent in 1860 to a high point of 22.2 percent in 1910, after which there was a decline to 13.0 percent in 1930. For both types of institutions these long-term increases were the largest reported for any business occupation. Since the differences between Nearing's findings for the banking group in 1917 and those for this study as of 1934-35 are also consistent with these trends, there can be little doubt as to the growing participation of bankers and financiers in the policy functions of university governing boards.

#### *Manufacturers and Manufacturing Officials*

The manufacturing entrepreneurs and executives—the owners and the officials—were equally as prominent on the boards of these 30 leading universities as were the bankers and financiers. These two types of captains of industry together formed 15.5 percent of the membership of these boards, a percentage almost as high as that for all eminent persons from trade, industry, and business listed in *Who's Who in America*. In contrast, manufacturers constituted only about 5 percent of the foundation boards studied by Lindeman and Coffman, and only one-quarter of one percent of the general working population. Consequently, they provided 44 times as many members on these university boards, and roughly 20 times as many members on the foundation boards, as they did among the total working population. Within this manufacturing group, owners were



about 3 times as numerous as officials. The enterprises represented were usually large and powerful. They included, for example, United States Steel, duPont, General Electric, and General Motors. The proportion of manufacturing officials was slightly higher on nongovernmental boards than on state boards, but the difference was much less conspicuous than in the case of bankers. Individual universities differed widely in the proportion of manufacturing leaders chosen for board membership. Washington University, the University of Kansas, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology ranked highest in this respect, all having 30 percent or more from this group, while Catholic University, and the Universities of Minnesota, Nebraska, and Virginia included no manufacturers whatsoever on their boards. Trends for the manufacturing group were not separately studied by McGrath, but his findings did indicate that business men as a whole in all decades between 1860 and 1930 had constituted between one-fifth and two-fifths of the trustees of both private and state institutions. The business men, the bankers, and the lawyers together constituted such a high percentage of total board membership in all these decades that by acting in concert they readily could have controlled most board decisions throughout this period.

#### *Other Types of Business Leaders*

In addition to the bankers and manufacturers, various miscellaneous types of business leaders contributed to the total in the following percentages: dealers and transportation officials, 5.9; insurance officials, 1.6; real estate officials, 1.1; and other business men, 2.0. The composition of the group of 43 dealers and transportation officials illustrates again the type of business leader chosen for these boards. Eleven held positions of first-rate importance in transportation or communication organizations; 7 were wholesale dealers, importers, or exporters; and the other 25 were merchants or merchandising executives. None was a small tradesman or storekeeper of the type commonly found in the general population. The group "real estate officials" includes some of doubtful classification, as for example: (1) a trustee describing his occupation as "farming and real estate," (2) a trustee reporting his occupation as "real estate and banking" and "capitalist," (3) a corporation president who was also president of a land company and a railroad, a co-receiver of another railroad, and director of a third railroad, and (4) an ex-governor of New York, then president of Empire State, Inc., and active in management of the Empire State Building. Among those in the "other" category were such men as the following: the president of the Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey, a key production official in the Shell Oil Co., another oil company president,

the president of one of the largest copper producing firms, another mining company president, the head of the Consolidation Coal Co., and four heads of construction firms. Among the miscellaneous business occupations, both the subclass for dealers and transportation officials and that for real estate officials reflected the usual tendency for the business men to be relatively more numerous on the private university boards than on state boards. The dealers and transportation officials and the insurance officials shared with the bankers and manufacturers the distinction of greater representation on university boards than on foundation boards. All these miscellaneous business groups were more numerous on university boards than in the general working population; the contrasts were the greatest, however, for the insurance and real estate officials.<sup>11</sup> Other comparisons and deductions as to trends are precluded by the lack of similar classifications in most other studies.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Public Officials*

In view of the public nature of modern universities, the representation of public officials on these boards is of particular significance. Their actual proportion among the trustees studied, however, was only 4.9 percent—a figure lower than that for bankers, for manufacturers, for dealers and transportation officials, for the legal profession, and for the clergy. Of the total of 36 public officials included, 17 were university trustees ex officio and held membership largely because of provisions in the university charters. Eight were governors; one, a lieutenant governor; one, a speaker of the state legislative assembly; and 7, state superintendents of public schools. As would be expected, public officials were almost twice as common relatively on boards of state universities as on those of nongovernmental institutions. In spite of prevailing ex officio provisions, however, public officials were only slightly more numerous proportionately on nongovernmental boards than on foundation boards. Among all the 30 university boards, they formed hardly a larger proportion than in the general list of eminent persons in *Who's Who in America*. Nevertheless, they were 29 times as numerous relatively as in the general population. Unfortunately no information on trends is available.

#### *Farmers*

In contrast to the bankers and manufacturers, farmers were conspicuous by their almost complete absence. Of the 734 trustees, only 7, or one percent, could be classed as farmers. These all belonged to the owner class, no farm tenants having been selected as board members. Only one of

the 493 trustees of nongovernmental university boards was a farmer. In addition, this farmer was also a director of a bank and an insurance company, and became a university trustee—and that for one year only—by virtue of filling another office which carried with it an ex officio seat on the university board! The other six farmers belonged to state university boards, where in some cases representation of farmers was required by law. These farmers, together with public officials, composed the only managerial groups with distinctly larger representation on state than on private university boards. One representative of agriculture, in reply to an inquiry from the author, described himself as “about the least of possible university trustees” and summarized his role during his short term on the board as follows:

During that year I attended all meetings, dutifully voted “Yes” as expected, and incidentally ate some excellent luncheons in good company. I enjoyed the experience, but a short time as ex officio member is hardly worth while counting. In fact I do not think you will wish to count such a one at all.<sup>13</sup>

Noteworthy also is the fact that all 7 trustees classed as farmers were members of boards of institutions offering curricula in agriculture. Not more than one farmer was on any one such board and 4 institutions offering curricula in agriculture had no farmer on their controlling board.<sup>14</sup> This situation leads one to recall Counts’ tabulation in 1927 of the composition of 8 boards controlling state agricultural colleges. His analysis showed that 26 percent of the board members of these colleges were from agricultural pursuits, 28 percent from professional service, and 32 percent from the proprietary group, exclusive of agricultural service.<sup>15</sup> The percentage of farmers for the 11 institutions included in the present study with curricula in agriculture was much more extreme, only 7 of the 245 board members, or 3 percent, being farmers.

Further light on the relative position of farmers on these boards is provided by several comparisons. The foundation boards were reported by both Lindeman and Coffman to contain no farmers, a pattern suggestive of that for private university boards in this study. Likewise in *Who’s Who in America*, eminent persons from agriculture were listed in exactly the same small proportion that characterized farmers on these 30 university boards. This small percentage was, of course, a marked contrast to the proportion of farmers in the nation, for in this country in 1930 farmers were nearly twice as numerous as were all other proprietary and managerial workers combined. Although constituting nearly 8 percent of the workers in the nation, farmers provided only one percent of the trustees of these leading universities. In contrast, the ratio of the percentage of bankers on these boards to the percentage of bankers in the nation was 408



times as high as that for farmers, that for manufacturers 338 times as high, and that for public officials 223 times as high.

Moreover, the trends with respect to the inclusion of farmers on university boards have not been such as to give encouragement to those who believe in the social importance of representation for agricultural pursuits. In 1860, 15.2 percent of the governing board members of state educational institutions studied by McGrath were farmers, but by 1930 the figure was only 8.7. On boards of nongovernmental institutions, the percentage shrank from 2.1 to 0.2 over the same period. Percentages for this study for 1934-35 were still lower than those quoted by McGrath for 1930. Also, they were considerably lower than Nearing's findings for 1917, Clark's findings for a similar period and Counts' findings for 1926, although part or all of these differences might be due to differences in the institutions studied. In fact, findings for this study approach closely the complete absence of farmers reported by Calhoun for the sample of trustees that he analyzed. This progressive displacement of farmers by business leaders has proceeded despite the increasing number of farmers who are graduates of state university agricultural courses, despite the high proportion of the nation's children and university students of farm origin, and despite the well-known power of farm organizations in state and national politics.

#### PROFESSIONAL PERSONS

##### *Lawyers and Judges*

By far the largest professional group and also the largest single occupational group on the boards studied was the legal profession—the lawyers and the judges—who accounted for more than a quarter of the 734 governing board members. Together they constituted more than half of all professional workers on these boards and outnumbered any other single profession 4 to 1. Thirty-nine percent of the state university trustees belonged to this profession and 20 percent of nongovernmental board members. Every one of the 30 boards included at least one member from this profession—the only occupational group so universally included in membership. Sixteen of the boards included 25 percent or more from this profession; 4, 50 percent or more; and one, 75 percent. The type of lawyer selected is suggested by the fact that 21 of the group were officers or directors of one or more of the 400 largest corporations of the nation; 11, of 2 or more such businesses; and 6, of 3 or more. The legal profession was slightly more numerous on nongovernmental boards than on foundation boards as portrayed by Lindeman and by Coffman. It was more than twice as numerous on these university boards as in *Who's Who in America* and 125 times as numerous as among the general working popu-

lation—the highest comparative ratio found for any occupational group on these boards.

As contrasted with business men and bankers, lawyers have maintained for a long period a prominent role in the government of both private and state universities. With few exceptions all studies have shown lawyers to be the largest occupational group on state university boards. McGrath's findings indicate that the proportion in this profession on the state university boards he studied has been rising each decade since 1910 from a low at that time of about 24 percent. For his sample of nongovernmental boards, McGrath's data show that the proportion of lawyers reached a high point of nearly 27 percent in 1920 and declined somewhat the following decade. At the beginning of each ten-year period since 1890, lawyers, in combination with business men and bankers, never constituted less than 60 percent of either these private or these state university boards—a clear majority.

### *Clergymen*

Among the professions the ministry ranked second to the legal profession in numbers on these boards. Of the 734 board members studied, 48, or 6.6 percent, were clergymen, of whom more than half were bishops or archbishops. Twenty-nine of these 48 were Catholic clergymen and 19, non-Catholic. All the 29 Catholic priests belonged to the governing board of Catholic University, where they outnumbered the laity approximately 3 to 1. The Northwestern University board was the only other with a substantial number of ministers. Representation of the clergy on the remaining boards was small. Eight of the 16 nongovernmental boards and 11 of 14 state university boards included no representation from the ministry. Altogether, the clergymen constituted about 9 percent of the membership of these nongovernmental boards, but only about one percent of these state university boards. Moreover, representation of the clergy appeared to have little relation to the extent of advanced study of religion in the universities governed by these boards. Of the 201 earned doctorates in religion granted by these 30 institutions during the preceding decade, 112 were awarded by the University of Chicago, although that board included only one minister; another 54 were awarded by Yale, which likewise had only one minister on its board. Catholic University, on the other hand, with 29 priests on its board, awarded only 3 such advanced degrees in religion during these 10 years.<sup>16</sup>

In spite of these generally low proportions, the clergymen were somewhat more numerous on the 16 nongovernmental boards than on the boards of American foundations as analyzed by Lindeman and Coff-

man,<sup>17</sup> and were 35 times as numerous relatively on the 30 boards as a whole than in the general population. On the other hand, the proportion of ministers listed in *Who's Who in America* was almost half again as great as on these 30 boards.

In historical retrospect the proportion of clergymen on these university boards appears relatively low. McGrath found that in 1860 clergymen composed 39 percent of the trustees of the nongovernmental institutions he studied. At that time no other occupational group rivalled in size these churchmen, the business men and bankers constituting together only 27 percent. The decline in the proportion of the clergy on these boards since that date has been marked and consistent.<sup>18</sup> However, even in the earliest years before the passage of the Morrill Act, the secular nature of state university boards was very pronounced, as was indicated by McGrath's findings that in 1860 only 4 percent of the trustees of the 5 state boards he studied were clergymen. By 1930 even this small percentage had shrunk to half its size in 1860. In general this study confirms the findings of both McGrath and Nearing as to the low proportion of ministers characteristic of recent university boards as contrasted with boards in the preceding century.

#### *Educators*

The small proportion of professional educators on the boards of these 30 leading universities would appear to accord with the commonly held theory that all educational experts should be excluded from membership on boards controlling educational policy. Of the 734 board members, only 34, or 4.6 percent, were classified as educators. All but 3<sup>19</sup> of these were on the boards of nongovernmental universities. The selective process operating in the appointment of these educators is illustrated by a review of some characteristics of the educators on these boards. Fifteen of the 34 from this profession were university presidents,<sup>20</sup> 12 of whom owed their membership to an ex officio relationship to their board. Although 11 other educators in the group were classed as "university professors," none of these had been named to these boards by their colleagues. Rather 8 were selected by the incumbent board members by the process of co-option, and 2 others were elected by alumni.<sup>21</sup> Their median age as of December 31, 1934 was 66 years. Moreover, these 11 "professors" were not academic professors in the usual sense. Five were holding or had held important administrative posts in the university of which they were then a trustee, and 5 others were holding or had held similar posts elsewhere in higher education. These positions were in 2 cases presidencies of institutions of higher education; in one, a presidency of a college board of trustees; in 3 others, a vice presidency; and in 5 others, deanships. The other



8 of the 34 "educators" were technically classed as "teachers." Actually, 7 were headmasters of private secondary schools and the other was the retired principal of Classical High School in Providence, R. I. Thus of the 34, none was a classroom teacher in the usual sense at the time of this study.

The proportion of professional educators on these boards, namely 4.6 percent, was in most cases lower than the findings of Nearing and McGrath for the universities they studied. In comparison with certain external yardsticks, the proportion of educators on these university boards was also definitely low. For example, Lindeman reported that 16.6 percent of foundation board members were educators, and Coffman, 17.7 percent. These proportions, about 2.7 times as high as for these university boards, characterized foundation boards in spite of the remoteness from education of much of the work of foundations. When compared with state university boards only, the foundation boards were found to contain about 14 times as high a proportion of educators as these boards. Educators listed in *Who's Who in America* comprised 19.3 percent of the persons of eminence listed, an even higher proportion than characterized foundation boards. In fact, the boards of these 30 leading institutions of higher learning contained even fewer persons proportionately who could be classified as "teachers" than did the total group of the nation's workers in 1930. On the other hand, college and university presidents and professors were 44 times as numerous relatively on these boards as in the general working population.

Trends with respect to educators on state boards apparently differ sharply from those for private university boards. McGrath reported a decline in the proportion of educators on state boards from 16.1 percent in 1870 to 4.4 in 1930, as compared with an increase for privately controlled boards from 6.8 to 10.0 for the same period. In view of the type of educator found on nongovernmental university boards in the present study, however, the significance of the rise as an indication of increased participation in university government by teachers in the usual sense is questionable.

#### *Other Professional Persons*

The other professions contributed only a small share of the board members of these 30 leading universities. The medical profession—the physicians and surgeons—composed 3.5 percent; engineers, 2.3; authors, editors, and reporters, 1.4; and other professional workers, 4.6. Within the category of "authors, editors, and reporters," only 3 could be classified as authors in the literary sense, and of these none gave his time exclusively to writing. Four others styled themselves "publicists" and 3 were

editors. The group of miscellaneous professions consisted of 6 university business administrators, 5 librarians or museum officials, 5 architects, 2 dentists, 2 astronomers, 2 physical scientists, one church official, one missionary official, one historian, one hospital administrator, one land title abstractor, one tester of pure bred cattle, one pension fund secretary, one civic association manager, one unpaid leader in social betterment work, one choir director, one grange official, and one labor union official who was formerly a cutter in a shoe factory. Artists and poets were entirely missing from these boards and music was represented only by one woman choir director. Significant also was the total absence of professional sociologists, economists, psychologists, political scientists, social workers, and social welfare administrators. Selectivity within each professional group was again apparent. Eighty-eight percent of the engineers, for example, were officers or directors, or both of business enterprises, and 2 from the literary professions were also university presidents. Many in other groups also held important business offices that their general professional classification fails to indicate.

Apparently any efforts exerted to appoint board members belonging to the professions in which the institution offered specialized instruction were not effective. Physicians and surgeons, for example, constituted only 4 percent of the board members of the universities conducting approved medical colleges,<sup>22</sup> while 8 universities with approved medical schools had no physician or surgeon on their controlling board. Of the 24 universities studied that had such schools of medicine, only 5 had more than one trustee from the medical profession, and only Harvard and the University of Minnesota had as many as 3. Likewise, engineers comprised less than 6 percent of the board members of the two technological institutions included in the study, namely Massachusetts Institute of Technology and California Institute of Technology.

In comparison with other groups, representation of these various professions on the university boards appears low. Foundation boards, for instance, contained on the average a larger proportion from these professions than did these boards. Similarly, persons of eminence from these professions were considerably more numerous in *Who's Who in America* than on these boards, especially editors, authors, and newspaper writers. Conversely, these professional groups appeared in much larger proportions on these boards than among workers of all types in the nation, although the contrast was clearly less marked than for bankers and lawyers. Since these "other" professions have always formed only a very small minority on university boards, reliable conclusions as to trends are difficult. Possibly engineers have increased slightly on the boards of private institutions, and physicians, on state boards.

## HOMEMAKERS

The relative absence of homemakers on these boards was conspicuous. They furnished only 12 members to the 30 boards, or 1.6 percent of the membership. Eleven of these women were on state boards, of which they constituted 4.6 percent of the membership. Privately controlled boards included only one homemaker, or a mere 0.2 percent of their membership. While only one of the 16 nongovernmental boards thus included a homemaker, 6 of the 12 state boards, principally in states contiguous to Lake Michigan, included one or more. Nevertheless, homemakers composed 36.8 percent of the workers of the nation as defined for purposes of this discussion. In relation to their numbers in the population, the business groups provided 100 times as many members to university boards as did homemakers, and the professional group 325 times as many. This small representation of the homemaking group on university boards is confirmed by the findings of both McGrath and Nearing, while McGrath's trend data show that even these small numbers represent an increase over the proportions in earlier decades. In 1860 and 1870 neither the private nor the state university boards he studied included any homemakers whatsoever.

## OTHER WORKERS

All other occupational groups in the nation were completely without direct representation on these 30 boards, unless perchance some of the 13 trustees whose occupations were not found followed these vocations. The absent groups, using Edward's terminology, are referred to in Table 8 as "clerks and kindred workers," "skilled workers and foremen," "semi-skilled workers," and "unskilled workers." Together they constituted 46.9 percent of all workers in the nation in 1930. This seemingly complete omission on governing boards of members of lower social-economic strata prevailed in spite of a Wisconsin statute stating that, of the members of the boards of Regents of the University of Wisconsin, at least "two shall be engaged in the manual trades."<sup>23</sup> Since 2 of the 13 trustees whose occupations were not ascertained belonged to the Wisconsin Board, it is possible that they did follow manual trades and thus met this legal requirement—or conceivably some here classified as "proprietors, managers, and officials" were considered by the Wisconsin Governor to have been engaged in a manual trade at the time of appointment.<sup>24</sup> One labor union official, a trustee originally appointed by a Farmer-Labor governor, was found on the Minnesota board, but under the adopted procedures he was classified as an official. All other investigators without exception have also found that members of these occupations of lower economic



status and social prestige were effectively excluded from membership on governing boards.

#### THE GENERAL PICTURE

When the specific occupations were grouped under several major classifications, the proportion of trustees from the professions was found to be approximately equal to that from the proprietary and managerial occupations. On state university boards, however, the professions were in the majority, while on private university boards, this place was held by proprietors, managers, and officials. On 10 of the 16 nongovernmental university boards, the total proprietary group equalled or exceeded the total professional group, but on 11 of the 14 state university boards, professional persons exceeded the proprietary and managerial. The proportion from the professions on all 30 boards combined, namely 49.2 percent, was substantially below the 63 percent reported for foundation boards by previous investigators, as well as below the 61 percent of professional persons among the eminent persons listed in *Who's Who in America*. The comparative picture for proprietors, managers, and officials (principally business leaders) was the reverse. Both the professional group and the proprietors, managers, and officials were present in proportions greatly in excess of the percentages that they constitute of the general population. In 1930 professional persons formed only 3.8 percent of all workers, and proprietors, managers, and officials, only 12.5. In all probability, these facts greatly understate the dominance of business leaders on these boards, for at least 47 percent of the trustees classed as professional persons were also officers or directors of business enterprises, as were 89 percent of the proprietors, managers, and officials. If professional persons holding those positions were reclassified as business men, the proportion of business men on these university boards would be increased to 71 percent. Similarly, if lawyers alone were added to the proprietary and managerial group, with which their activities and outlook very often identify them, the proportion of business men would likewise be raised to 71 percent.

This concentration of business leaders on university governing boards, also consistently reported by other investigators, appears to have been progressively accentuated during the last eight decades. According to McGrath's findings, business men and bankers on boards of nongovernmental institutions jumped from 27.4 percent in 1860 to 52.2 in 1930, while the 5 professions combined declined from 70.0 percent to 46.5. If lawyers are added to business men and bankers, the increase for the combined business-legal group was from 48.0 percent to 73.6 during the same period. For state universities, a lesser decline for the 5 professions was

reported and a lesser increase for business men and bankers, but the direction of the trend was similar until 1910, after which a decline in the proportion of business men on these 5 boards appeared.<sup>25</sup> That the long-term rise of bankers, business men, and lawyers to positions of dominance on university boards is a phenomenon of considerable historical significance has been pointed out by Counts in the statement quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The social implications of this increase are considered further in the final chapter.

An inevitable consequence of the dominance of business men and lawyers on these boards was the small number of members of other occupations. Homemakers were chosen for these boards only in very small numbers and persons following manual or clerical trades, evidently not at all. If one adds farmers to these occupations with little or no representation, it becomes apparent that 91.5 percent of the nation's workers together furnished but 2.6 percent of the trustees of these 30 leading universities.

This picture of these key governing boards in terms of the occupations of their members is supplemented in the succeeding chapters with information on the incomes of these members, their business connections, age, sex, residence, length of service, type of board membership held, and other matters. Together these facts provide a much more significant picture of the social and economic composition of these 30 boards than can be pieced together with data on occupation alone.

## CHAPTER VIII

### INCOMES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*Beginning with a knowledge of the amount of income received, and allowing for a small percentage of exceptions, it is possible to picture the social circles in which the individuals move. . . .*—PAUL H. NYSTROM.<sup>1</sup>

#### IMPORTANCE OF INCOMES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

INCOME, LIKE OCCUPATION, is an important determinant of social and economic status. As Nystrom has indicated, in most cases the income a man receives provides a reliable basis for predicting the social circles in which he moves. His experiences in these social circles, together with his related job activities and connections, influence to a significant degree his opinions on political parties, candidates, and public issues of all types. This association between income level and opinion has been repeatedly demonstrated in the returns from public opinion polls,<sup>2</sup> and serves to illustrate the commonly observed relation between income levels and thought and action patterns in general. Because of this relation, income data provide a further important clue to the social-economic orientation of the trustees of these leading universities. Moreover, such data serve as objective evidence of the type of selection within occupational groups operating in the choice of trustees for these institutions. An intensive search was therefore undertaken for data on the incomes of these 734 trustees.

#### SOURCES AND COMPLETENESS OF INCOME DATA

##### *Net Taxable Incomes*

Limited data on net taxable incomes were obtained from newspaper lists of federal income-tax assessments. In accordance with an act of Congress, the Collectors of Internal Revenue made available in September 1925 at their district offices information on the sums paid or payable by individuals as federal income taxes for 1924. A few weeks later the public was barred from access to this information, but in the meantime certain newspapers had obtained and published lists of taxpayers' names, to-



gether with the amount of income tax for each, a figure from which their net taxable income could be calculated. Similarly, in September 1924, information as to income-tax payments was opened to the public, but at that time regulations and conditions surrounding release effectively thwarted many inquiries, especially when knowledge of the tax payments of a number of persons was sought. At no other time during the present century has information on the federal income-tax payments of so many individuals been available to the public.

For purposes of this study, this information in newspaper files was incomplete in two important respects: In the first place, net taxable incomes, as declared on federal income-tax returns at that time, represented net income after numerous deductions and omissions—sometimes substantial—had been made, as for example, the omission of income from tax-exempt securities, salaries paid by state and local governments, and the rental value of real estate and other property owned and used by the taxpayer and his family. Among persons of wealth the net taxable income is in many cases only the residue declared after omissions, deductions, avoidances, and evasions have occurred.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, publication of these tax assessments was very incomplete. Apparently in many internal revenue districts no newspapers published income-tax payments, while in all others only selected lists were printed, sometimes without indication of the basis of selection. Sometimes the names and payments of some small taxpayers were published when obviously many who paid equally small sums, as well as an important number who paid somewhat larger sums, had been omitted. The longest and most complete lists found were those in the *New York Times*, September 1-13, 1925. This newspaper claimed that it printed the names and payments of more than 50,000 taxpayers, or somewhat less than one-tenth of the number of federal income-tax returns filed in New York City. For that city it claimed to have published the names of practically all taxpayers whose 1924 income tax amounted to more than \$500 (and whose net taxable incomes, therefore, were above \$14,000) and for approximately 80 other cities, similar information for taxpayers whose tax amounted to more than \$10,000 (and whose net taxable incomes, therefore, were above \$65,000).

In spite of the incompleteness of this information in these two important respects, the decision to search these newspaper files was made since no more complete information on incomes was publicly available. Addresses of these trustees for the year 1924 were first obtained and then used to group the trustees by internal revenue districts. The files of newspapers published in various districts in that year were then hunted down

and searched. Altogether, the files of 67 newspapers were examined, with usable lists being found in 27. Since the lists were often either partially or wholly unalphabetized, this task was especially arduous, for in such instances many or all names in a district had to be kept in mind constantly during the search. Inevitably some omissions must have resulted, as, for example, when trustees maintained legal residences for tax purposes elsewhere than at their usual place of residence. In spite of these unintended omissions, the highly selective and spotty character of the lists, and their complete lack in certain districts, income-tax payments were discovered for 207 of the 734 trustees, payments from higher income brackets undoubtedly being found relatively more frequently than those from the lower brackets.

From this tax information the net taxable incomes of these 207 board members were computed using the tax law for that year as a basis and assuming that all trustees were married, but without dependents. This procedure resulted in a conservative estimate of income since other available data indicated that at least 137 of this group had children, and that 70 had 3 or more, while only 26 of the 207, so far as was known, had neither wives nor children. When separate tax returns were filed by husband and wife, the net taxable incomes for each were computed and then combined and regarded as the income of the trustee in question—whether husband or wife—since the dividing of sources of income between husband and wife, and the filing of separate tax returns by each is a common device for reducing taxes on large incomes.

Unfortunately the income estimates pertained to the year 1924, a decade earlier than the date of focus of this study. However, the year 1924 possibly is less undesirable than might first appear, for apparently it was a normal year in respect to the national income level. A study by the National Bureau of Economic Research showed 1924 to have been slightly above the mean and slightly below the median national income for the period 1919 through 1935.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the incomes reported for the year 1924 may be thought of as indicative in one sense of the general income level of these 207 trustees at the time they first became board members, for slightly more of them took office after the end of that year than before that time.<sup>5</sup> Probably, if the interpretations of readers are confined to those consistent with the limitations of the data, no great misinterpretation of the income level of these trustees relative to that of gainful workers in general will occur.

#### *Salaries*

To supplement these estimates of net taxable incomes, information on salaries was assembled wherever feasible. The sources used included: (1)

the Securities and Exchange Commission file of the salaries and other remuneration paid officers and directors of corporations with securities listed on national exchanges, (2) the House Ways and Means Committee record of corporation salaries of \$15,000 and over, held open to the public for some years,<sup>6</sup> (3) public documents listing the salaries of public officials, and (4) the *Salary Directory*.<sup>7</sup> Resort to these sources netted salary figures for 158 trustees for dates approximately in the middle 1930's.<sup>8</sup> The group must be assumed, of course, to be biased through the inclusion of a considerably greater proportion of trustees receiving high salaries than of trustees receiving more modest remuneration. On the other hand, at these income levels, salaries considerably understate income because of the omission of dividends, interest, rents, royalties, etc. Since income-tax data were also available for 63 of those for whom salary figures were located, the total group for whom net taxable incomes or salaries, or both, were found, numbered 302.

The existence of both salary and net taxable income data for 63 of these trustees provides a rough clue to the effect on the findings of the decade difference in the dates of these two types of data. The average net taxable income of these 63 trustees in 1924 was \$157,000, while their average salary alone in the middle thirties was \$155,000. Since the occupational distribution of this group and the corporation connections of its members indicated that practically all had important proprietary interests, and since the salary data in these 63 instances did not include remuneration paid by more than one employer, or income of other types, such as dividends, interest, rents, and royalties, one must assume that the average net taxable income of these 63 persons, dated roughly about 1935, must have exceeded considerably the corresponding average for 1924.<sup>9</sup> In fact, the 1935 salary figures alone for 28 of the 63 individuals exceeded the total 1924 net taxable income figures for the same individuals. Since both national income as a whole and per capita real income declined between these dates,<sup>10</sup> this observation is consistent with the trend noted by economists toward the accentuation of inequalities of income during that decade.<sup>11</sup> The data are inadequate, however, to warrant the assumption that the trustees as a whole fared similarly well with respect to income.<sup>12</sup> In fact, no satisfactory means exist for comparing the economic status of the group of known net taxable income with the group of known salary.

#### *Other Possible Sources*

Various other data regarding income and wealth might have been used, but in most instances they were relatively unavailable except at pro-



hibitive cost. In this connection consideration was given to the purchase of the services of Dun & Bradstreet, Inc., and an experimental test of this procedure was made. Because of the very high cost of this method and weaknesses observed in the experimental returns, it was abandoned, although some information garnered from the test was used. Likewise, the yield from specific securities owned could have been calculated in the case of officers or directors of listed corporations and beneficial owners of more than 10 percent of any registered security, but again the findings were judged too costly in time. Commissions and bonuses, where discovered, were regarded as being part of salaries paid. Further income information could also have been obtained from the records of the United States Board of Tax Appeals, and the first 53 names on an alphabetical list of the trustees' names were actually checked against these records. Of this sample, 15 percent were found to have filed appeals, with a number admitting incomes in the half-million-dollar income bracket. An examination of several cases revealed that the use of those data would be further complicated by the differences in years covered, and that, in relation to later years, the 1924 figures already obtained were very conservative. As a result, the data from the Board of Tax Appeals were not utilized. It is unfortunate that a more complete record of the incomes of these trustees was not available within the practical limits of time and cost, but with care in analysis and interpretation, the accessible data, though fragmentary, add significant information on the social-economic status of these trustees.

#### INCOME FINDINGS

##### *Basic Income Facts for 302 Board Members*

The 207 governing board members whose 1924 net taxable incomes were ascertained constituted 28 percent of the trustees studied. For an additional 95, or 13 percent, for whom tax information was lacking, salaries were found for a period about a decade later. Thus important income information—although undoubtedly incomplete—was available for 302 different trustees, or 41 percent of the total. Distributions and averages are presented in Table 13. Since the net taxable income figures were more complete than the salary figures both as a picture of the income of individuals and in group coverage, salary data for trustees for whom tax information was also found were omitted in this and other tables on income.

As an examination of Table 13 indicates, nearly half of the 734 trustees of the 30 leading universities were persons of considerable privilege in the present economic system, at least with regard to the incomes they

received. For 1924, the only year for which data could be found, the net taxable incomes discovered averaged \$102,000, while half the trustees with known taxable incomes reported \$53,000 or more. If, in the absence of comparable information for the remaining 527 trustees, the incomes of all others were assumed to have been zero, the total received by these 207 trustees in that year, if divided equally among all, would have averaged over \$27,500. Moreover, concerning 95 of the remaining trustees assumed in this estimate to have been without income, it is known that they received salaries a decade later averaging \$49,000 a year, and that half of the 95 received \$27,000 or over. If the total known salaries of these 95 for the later period were added to the known incomes for 1924, the average for all would have been raised to \$35,000 per trustee, even though 432 of the 734 were still assumed to have received no income whatsoever. Since obviously the other 432 did receive in most cases at least comfortable incomes, the \$35,000 figure is clearly a gross underestimate of the average economic status of these trustees. The sprinkling of exceedingly high incomes among the group is also significant. Eight net taxable incomes and 2 salaries were \$500,000 or over, and 47 more net taxable incomes and 3 salaries fell between \$100,000 and \$500,000. In contrast, only 5 with known taxable incomes or known salaries fell in the class under \$5,000, and only 20 more, in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 group. With more complete coverage, these low income groups would, of course, have had larger representation, but more complete information would also have raised the income figures reported for many others.

Moreover, the figures for these 302 trustees fail to reveal the full extent of high incomes among these board members, for the evidence indicates that many for whom no net income or salary figure was found must, nevertheless, have received substantial incomes. No net income or salary figure was found, for example, for 243 trustees, each of whom held one or more directorships or major executive positions in business or finance, while the number of firms with which these 243 were thus connected averaged 3.8 per trustee. Twenty-seven of these trustees were officers or directors of one of the 400 largest corporations in the country; 9, of 2 such corporations; and 8, of 3 or more. In addition, 62 others were directors or major executive officers of one financial institution not among these 400; 32, of 2 such institutions; and 18, of 3 or more. Clearly, a complete income distribution for all the trustees studied would add many names to the upper brackets, even though one must assume from the selective character of available information that comparable averages for those of unknown income would fall below those reported in Table 13. Considering the sources, the methods of estimate, the probable

omissions, and the numerous permissible forms of tax-exempt income—as for example income from federal, state, and local bonds—one finds little reason to doubt that considerably more than half of the trustees of these 30 leading universities received substantial incomes either during their terms of office or not long prior to appointment.

*Comparison with Incomes of the General Population*

Comparisons with the general income level in the country provide valuable perspective. The average income of those with known taxable incomes, namely \$102,000, or the average salary of others with known salaries, namely \$49,000, and even the gross underestimate for all trustees, namely \$35,000 (based on the assumption that all 432 trustees for whom information was lacking were completely without incomes)—all substantially exceed the average income of \$1,563 for all gainful workers in 1924,<sup>13</sup> or the corresponding figure of \$1,013 for 1935.<sup>14</sup> If the true incomes of these 302 university trustees rather than their net taxable incomes or salaries were known, the contrasts undoubtedly would be greater still. On the other hand, the discovery of data for the trustees of unknown income, or the use of more conservative measures of average income, such as medians or modes, would reduce the differences; neither, however, would change the nature of the basic contrasts revealed.

Comparisons of distributions at the upper end of the scale, where the findings for these trustees probably were more nearly complete, afford another valid approach. In 1924, 0.3 percent of the 734 trustees were known to have reported taxable incomes of \$1,000,000 and over, while only 0.001 percent of the nation's income-tax payers reported incomes at this level.<sup>15</sup> In other words, persons with taxable million-dollar incomes were at least 300 times as common among these university trustees as among income-tax payers in general. In the income-tax category of \$500,000 and over were found 1.1 percent of the 734, but only 0.004 percent of all income-tax payers—again a 300 to 1 ratio. Similarly, 7.5 percent of the trustees clearly belonged to the group receiving \$100,000 and over, but only 0.078 percent of the nation's income-tax payers—a 100 to 1 ratio. At the other end of the scale, an opposite relation existed. The income bracket under \$5,000 included 91 percent of all income-tax payers, while if all the 734 trustees whose net taxable incomes were unknown were assumed to fall in that bracket, it would still have included only 73 percent of all trustees studied.

These comparisons minimize the contrasts in two ways: (1) they assume that all cases of large taxable incomes among the trustees were discovered, when the evidence indicates that many were not, and (2)



trustees are compared with other income-tax payers, who at that time were a rather select group, rather than with gainful workers as a whole. If the proportions of trustees in the higher income brackets are compared with those of all gainful workers in the same classes, the contrasting ratios of 300 to 1 and 100 to 1 become 1800 to 1 and 600 to 1, respectively.<sup>16</sup> When information on occupation and business connections in other chapters is also taken into account, it would appear that practically all the trustees are members of families whose incomes place them in the upper 10 percent of the nation (\$2,600 and up). Probably at least half of the trustees of these 30 leading universities were members of families enjoying incomes that ranked in 1935-36 in the upper 1 percent of family incomes in the nation (\$10,000 and over), and possibly in the upper 0.5 percent (\$15,000 and over). Only 0.1 percent of the nation's families and single individuals<sup>17</sup> had annual incomes in that year equal to, or greater than, the gross underestimate of \$35,000 previously quoted as a minimum estimate of the average for the trustee group as a whole. Thus in incomes, as in occupations, these trustees clearly can not be regarded as typical of the gainfully occupied as a whole.

#### *Comparison of Incomes of Board Members of State and Private Universities*

The great gaps in income data unfortunately permit only very tentative and reserved deductions as to differences between universities and types of universities in the income levels of their board members. The known distribution of certain high incomes does definitely suggest, however, a more generous level of personal incomes among board members of private as compared with state universities. Of the 493 members of boards of nongovernmental universities, net taxable incomes for the year 1924 were found for 159 trustees, and salaries for a decade later for an additional 84 trustees—together 243, or about half the total for this group. If these income and salary figures are consolidated, irrespective of qualifications and dates, these incomes average about \$90,000 per year, exclusive of miscellaneous types of supplementary income not included in the figures. For the 159 known net taxable incomes, the median was \$61,000, and for the 84 known salaries of those of unknown income, the median was \$27,000.

In contrast, income facts were found for only 59 trustees of state universities, or about one-fourth of the total—a fact in itself suggestive of a less generous income level for this group since the sources utilized were such as to reveal mainly the higher incomes. The 48 of these 59 for whom the 1924 net taxable income was the principal known figure showed a

median of only \$18,000, while those 11 for whom salary a decade later was the only known figure showed a median of \$33,000.<sup>18</sup> When both types of income information are consolidated regardless of differences, the average income thus calculated for state university board members becomes \$65,000, a figure \$25,000 below the corresponding one for private universities. Moreover, the only 2 trustees with net taxable incomes of over a million dollars were members of boards of private universities. Thus the limited information available points consistently toward higher incomes among the trustees of nongovernmental universities.

Data for specific universities are even less satisfactory for use in comparisons. For this reason reference to averages for individual universities is omitted in most cases. As a substitute, rounded income figures for individual trustees are presented in Table 14, without individual identification, in simple arrays for each university studied; thus the reader is left to make his own generalizations. For 9 universities, however, some type of income information was discovered for half or more of the trustees. Since in these instances averages of known incomes may have some general significance, the following means are reported: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, \$141,000; Princeton, \$103,000; Washington University, \$65,000; Columbia and California Institute of Technology, \$62,000 each; Harvard, \$61,000; Johns Hopkins, \$54,000; Chicago, \$48,000; and Yale, \$39,000.<sup>19</sup> For Johns Hopkins and Washington University these are strictly net taxable income figures, no salaries having been found. For the other 7, the averages are based on a consolidation of all known income figures, giving preference, however, to net income data over salary data, and excluding trustees of unknown income. Probably the averages understate the incomes of the individuals to whom they apply, but overstate those of board members as a whole, though possibly not those of specific university boards. Corresponding medians, of course, would be somewhat lower.

Certain instances of exceptionally high incomes justify special comment. Both persons with net taxable incomes in 1924 of over a million were members of the University of Pennsylvania board, their incomes being at least \$1,245,673 and \$1,127,149. Salary figures for these same individuals a decade later were \$1,000,000 and \$1,330,000 respectively. A third trustee, a member of the board of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, fell short of a taxable net income of a million in 1924 by less than \$4,000. Board members with 1924 net taxable incomes between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 were distributed as follows: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2; Brown, 2; Princeton, one; and University of North Carolina, one. Salaries in the middle thirties of \$500,000 or over

### *Incomes of Board Members*

were found as follows: Brown, one; Harvard, one; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one; Northwestern, one; University of Pennsylvania, 2; and University of California, one.<sup>20</sup> This scattering of exceedingly high incomes is confined almost exclusively to private university boards. For certain other boards, little or no income information was located. In view of the sources used, members of these boards may be presumed in most cases to have received considerably less generous incomes. No income information was found for any trustee of the University of Missouri except only one income figure each for Clark University, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Virginia—9 in all, 8 of private and 1 of state universities. This consistent difference between state and private universities, though supported by only fragmentary income data, is consistent with the findings on occupations and business connections viewed in other chapters.

### *Comparison of Incomes by Occupation Groups*

The gaps in income information make deductions regarding average incomes for specific occupations among these trustees similarly hazardous. Conclusions on this point must, in the main, be confined to the major occupation groups—(1) proprietors, managers, and officials and (2) professional workers—for which pertinent income data are summarized in Table 15.

Some type of income information was found for 199 proprietors, managers, and officials, or nearly six-tenths of the group, while similar information was found for only about one-fourth of professional workers. The differences in income distribution also were marked. Although one professional person was found with a net taxable income of over \$500,000, or a salary figure alone of over \$100,000, 15 proprietors, managers, and officials were in one of these two fortunate top classes. Likewise, the mean and median of the known net taxable incomes of proprietors, managers, and officials were \$133,000 and \$74,000 respectively, as contrasted with the corresponding mean of \$49,000 and the median of \$28,000 for trustees from the professions—averages in each case not much over one-third those for the business group. Salary averages also differed in the same direction, but to lesser degree.

The number of trustees within single occupation classes for whom income information was found was too small to justify the reporting of averages except in a few single instances. It is clear, for example, that the average income for bankers, manufacturers, and lawyers conspicuously exceeded that for the major category of proprietors, managers, and officials. The average for bankers, brokers, and money lenders of known net taxable income



median of only \$18,000, while those 11 for whom salary a decade later was the only known figure showed a median of \$33,000.<sup>18</sup> When both types of income information are consolidated regardless of differences, the average income thus calculated for state university board members becomes \$65,000, a figure \$25,000 below the corresponding one for private universities. Moreover, the only 2 trustees with net taxable incomes of over a million dollars were members of boards of private universities. Thus the limited information available points consistently toward higher incomes among the trustees of nongovernmental universities.

Data for specific universities are even less satisfactory for use in comparisons. For this reason reference to averages for individual universities is omitted in most cases. As a substitute, rounded income figures for individual trustees are presented in Table 14, without individual identification, in simple arrays for each university studied; thus the reader is left to make his own generalizations. For 9 universities, however, some type of income information was discovered for half or more of the trustees. Since in these instances averages of known incomes may have some general significance, the following means are reported: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, \$141,000; Princeton, \$103,000; Washington University, \$65,000; Columbia and California Institute of Technology, \$62,000 each; Harvard, \$61,000; Johns Hopkins, \$54,000; Chicago, \$48,000; and Yale, \$39,000.<sup>19</sup> For Johns Hopkins and Washington University these are strictly net taxable income figures, no salaries having been found. For the other 7, the averages are based on a consolidation of all known income figures, giving preference, however, to net income data over salary data, and excluding trustees of unknown income. Probably the averages understate the incomes of the individuals to whom they apply, but overstate those of board members as a whole, though possibly not those of specific university boards. Corresponding medians, of course, would be somewhat lower.

Certain instances of exceptionally high incomes justify special comment. Both persons with net taxable incomes in 1924 of over a million were members of the University of Pennsylvania board, their incomes being at least \$1,245,673 and \$1,127,149. Salary figures for these same individuals a decade later were \$1,000,000 and \$1,330,000 respectively. A third trustee, a member of the board of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, fell short of a taxable net income of a million in 1924 by less than \$4,000. Board members with 1924 net taxable incomes between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 were distributed as follows: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2; Brown, 2; Princeton, one; and University of North Carolina, one. Salaries in the middle thirties of \$500,000 or over

were found as follows: Brown, one; Harvard, one; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one; Northwestern, one; University of Pennsylvania, 2; and University of California, one.<sup>20</sup> This scattering of exceedingly high incomes is confined almost exclusively to private university boards. For certain other boards, little or no income information was located. In view of the sources used, members of these boards may be presumed in most cases to have received considerably less generous incomes. No information was found for any trustee of the University of Missouri, and only one income figure each for Clark University, Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Virginia—9 in all, 8 of them state universities. This consistent difference between state and private universities, though supported by only fragmentary income data, is consistent with the findings on occupations and business connections reviewed in other chapters.

#### *Comparison of Incomes by Occupation Groups*

The gaps in income information make deductions regarding average incomes for specific occupations among these trustees similarly hazardous. Conclusions on this point must, in the main, be confined to the two major occupation groups—(1) proprietors, managers, and officials and (2) professional workers—for which pertinent income data are summarized in Table 15.

Some type of income information was found for 199 proprietors, managers, and officials, or nearly six-tenths of the group, while similar information was found for only about one-fourth of professional workers. The differences in income distribution also were marked. Although no professional person was found with a net taxable income of over \$300,000, or a salary figure alone of over \$100,000, 15 proprietors, managers, and officials were in one of these two fortunate top classes. Likewise the mean and median of the known net taxable incomes of proprietors, managers, and officials were \$133,000 and \$74,000 respectively, as contrasted with the corresponding mean of \$49,000 and the median of \$28,000 for trustees from the professions—averages in each case not much over one-third those for the business group. Salary averages also differed in the same direction, but to lesser degree.

The number of trustees within single occupation classes for whom information was found was too small to justify the reporting of averages except in a few single instances. It is clear, for example, that the averages for bankers, manufacturers, and lawyers conspicuously exceeded those for the major category of proprietors, managers, and officials. The 48 bankers, brokers, and money lenders of known net taxable income had

a mean taxable income of \$168,000 and a median of \$87,000, while the 22 additional bankers for whom salary only was found had a mean salary of \$93,000 and a median of \$48,000. The 37 manufacturers for whom net taxable incomes in 1924 were found showed a mean of \$137,000 and a median of \$82,000<sup>21</sup>—all figures in excess of the corresponding averages for proprietors, managers, and officials as a whole. Within the professional group, lawyers were conspicuous for their relatively high incomes. Net taxable incomes for 1924 were found for 44 lawyers, of whom the mean income was \$55,000 and the median income, \$31,000.<sup>22</sup> High incomes were not confined, however, to these 3 occupations. In the depression period of the thirties, 10 business men, other than manufacturers or bankers, had salaries above \$75,000. Although no professional salaries above this level were found among these trustees, the 1924 net taxable incomes in several other professional groups also ranged upward to relatively generous maximums. For engineers the top net taxable income figure found was \$77,000; for physicians and surgeons, \$68,000; for clergymen, \$88,000; for college presidents, \$288,000; and for authors and other writers, \$61,000.<sup>23</sup> No income or salary data were found for any trustee classified as a teacher, and in only two instances were figures found for college professors. Presumably salaries among trustees in the educational profession were not of sufficient magnitude to attract the attention of the compilers of the salary and income sources used.

These incomes contrast sharply with average income figures for all members of these same occupational groups in the nation. For example, in 1935 when the known salaries of proprietors, managers, and officials on these boards averaged \$55,000, exclusive of income from other sources, nonrelief families in business occupations in the nation received an average income of \$3,079 from all sources.<sup>24</sup> For professional persons among the trustees, the average known salary in 1935 was \$27,000, exclusive of income from other sources, while over the nation in that year the total income of nonrelief families in the professions was on the average \$4,022.<sup>25</sup> Net income figures for 1924 or salary figures for a decade later were found for 53 lawyers in the present study. When consolidated, these figures produced an approximate average of \$49,000, whereas the average income of lawyers over the nation has been estimated for 1935 as \$4,150.<sup>26</sup> These contrasts are so great that they can not be wiped out even by application of the extreme and patently untrue assumption that those for whom no information was available had no income. Persons of particularly high income within these major occupation groups clearly have been selected with unusual frequency for membership on the governing boards of the 30 leading universities. Further comparisons for other



occupations are prevented both by gaps in data for trustees and by absence of suitable comparative national figures for those occupations, but only a casual inspection of the raw data on incomes by occupation is needed to convince one that this generalization is probably widely applicable.

From the combined evidence on incomes, it thus appears reasonably certain that a very substantial proportion, if not practically all, of the trustees of the 30 universities studied were chosen not only from the upper 10 percent of the income distribution for the nation, but also from among the financially more successful within each major vocational group represented. This conclusion is still further confirmed in the following chapter which deals with the corporation affiliations of university governing boards.

## CHAPTER IX

### MAJOR BUSINESS OFFICES HELD BY GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*As the flood of gold rolled into the chests of the various colleges of religious origins, the power of the clergy in management correspondingly declined. . . . Appealing now to the leaders of business enterprise for endowments, they [college administrators] drafted men of money into the service of collegiate direction until at the end of the century the roster of American trustees of higher learning read like a corporation directory—CHARLES A. AND MARY R. BEARD.<sup>1</sup>*

#### THE BASIC DATA ON MAJOR BUSINESS OFFICES AND DIRECTORSHIPS

THE OCCUPATIONS OF TRUSTEES and the large incomes they receive reveal only partially the place of these trustees in the American economic system. Their commanding role in the business world is more fully disclosed in the present chapter by information on their offices and directorships in business enterprises. The basic data on this subject are provided in Tables 16 and 17, which deal, first, with the offices and directorships held by these board members in various types of business enterprises without regard to size and, second, with their relationships to the 400 largest businesses in the United States. Corresponding information for trustees of specific universities appears in Tables 18 and 19.

These tabulations are all based on analyses of biographical data compiled as described in Chapter III. Because biographical data were largely missing for approximately 3 percent of the trustees, and because personal histories in a number of other cases must have omitted all or some of such affiliations, the figures cited should be interpreted as understatements of top business positions held by the trustees of these 30 leading universities. The counts include leading executives, such as president, vice president, secretary, and general manager,<sup>2</sup> but persons holding multiple titles or positions in a single business enterprise were counted only once. The figures omit organizations regarded as nonprofit, including those which were educational, religious, charitable, civic, or government-owned.<sup>3</sup>

Table 17, designed to reveal the extent to which these trustees held major offices or directorships in large-scale businesses, is based on a list of the 400 largest business organizations in the United States. For this purpose the list of the 200 largest nonbanking corporations used by Berle and Means in their significant book, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*,<sup>4</sup> was adopted. To it was added a list of the 200 largest financial corporations, prepared by the author specifically for use in this chapter. The latter list included commercial banks, savings banks, federal reserve banks, life insurance companies, other types of insurance companies, investment trusts, and investment houses, all of which were regarded by Berle and Means as banking corporations. Except in the case of investment houses, the gross assets of each firm were used in both lists to measure size. The selection of investment houses was based on the amount of bond offerings headed in 1935.

The magnitude of the 400 largest businesses covered by these two lists is almost beyond comprehension. Practically all of the 200 nonfinancial corporations on January 1, 1930, had gross assets of 100 million dollars or more each, and each financial institution other than investment houses had gross assets of over 60 million. The investment houses included were those which in 1935 headed bond offerings totalling over 60 million dollars. The smallest financial organization among the 200 had in 1930 over 100 times the assets of an average-sized business in 1927, and the smallest nonbanking corporation had assets 150 times as large as that of the average nonbanking corporation. Moreover, a number of the 400 largest businesses were holding companies and were thus in control of assets much greater than those listed on their balance sheets. Electric Bond and Share, for example, was listed by Berle and Means as having gross assets of 756 million dollars, but the estimated gross assets of 4 subsidiary corporations for 1930 totaled 2,245 million. According to Berle and Means, the 200 largest nonbanking corporations controlled at that time nearly half of all corporate wealth in the United States. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company alone controlled more wealth than the total wealth within the borders of 21 states.<sup>5</sup> The economic power of the 400 largest enterprises on the consolidated list was thus clearly of decisive importance in the United States.

#### GENERAL FINDINGS

From Table 16 it is evident that 66 percent of all the 734 trustees studied held one or more leading offices or directorships in one or more business enterprises; 51 percent held such positions in 2 or more business firms; and 40 percent, in 3 or more. No evidence was found to in-



dicating that the other 34 percent held any leading business office or directorship, but full biographical facts probably would have revealed scattered connections even for these trustees. The 293 trustees holding 3 or more leading business positions averaged slightly over 8 such positions in as many different business firms. One trustee stated that he was a director or officer in 35 corporations. The group of trustees as a whole held a total of 2,656 such controlling positions, an average of 3.6 positions per trustee in the entire group, or 5.5 positions for each trustee known to hold such a position.

Since only 47.4 percent of the governing board members were classified as proprietors, managers, and officials, obviously some of these numerous positions were held by trustees tabulated under professional pursuits. Investigation revealed that 47 percent of the professional group (171 trustees) held a total of 586 leading business offices or directorships, or both, an average of 3.4 for each with any known position. If professional trustees with such major business connections had been classified as proprietors, managers, and officials—as might have been appropriate—the percent in this category would have been swelled to 71, while the proportion of strictly professional persons would have shrunk to 26 percent.<sup>6</sup> With the exception of homemakers, all 20 specific occupational groups on these boards included one or more trustees who were officers or directors, or both, of business enterprises.

The 30 universities studied differed widely with reference to the business positions of their trustees. Sixty-nine percent of the members of nongovernmental boards were found to occupy major business offices, as contrasted with 59 percent of state university board members. Individual boards ranged all the way from a low of 23 percent for Catholic University to a high of 93 percent for Washington University. Other boards with a high proportion of members holding leading business offices or directorships were: University of Kansas (89 percent), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (84 percent), University of Chicago (83 percent), California Institute of Technology (83 percent), and Cornell University (80 percent). Sharing the lower ranges with Catholic University were the University of Illinois (36 percent), the University of Wisconsin (35 percent), and the University of Minnesota (31 percent). Percentages for all universities included in the analysis are given in Table 18.

The extent to which these university trustees held major administrative positions in large, as contrasted with small, businesses is suggested by Table 17. Almost half (194) of the 400 largest business organizations of the country had among their officers or directors persons who were at the time of the study also members of the governing boards of these 30

leading universities. Even among these 400, those corporations having the greater assets provided the larger proportion of trustees holding such positions. The 194 major businesses thus represented on these university boards had as officers or directors 175 different trustees covered by the present study, or approximately one-fourth of the total. These 175 persons held a total of 386 directorships or leading executive positions in these 194 mammoth enterprises, or an average of nearly 2 per business thus connected with these boards—and this in spite of the fact that no one trustee was counted more than once per business enterprise regardless of the number of offices occupied. The large number of major positions held by these 175 trustees in the 400 largest business enterprises is explained by the existence of multiple directorships whereby a few individuals are enabled to wield economic power in a number of industries. Not only did these 175 trustees hold 386 offices or directorships in enterprises numbered among the 400 largest business organizations in the country, but they held in addition 935 other similar positions in enterprises not among the 400 largest, making a total of 1,321 positions, or an average of 7.5 per trustee for this key group of 175.

Nongovernmental and state universities again showed the usual difference in business connections. Thirty-two percent of the governing board members of privately controlled universities, but only 8 percent of those of state universities, were officials of one or more of the 400 largest businesses. Washington University again ranked highest, with 53 percent of its board members with such connections. Stanford, with 50 percent, ranked second. Of the state universities, the University of California stood highest, with 30 percent with offices or directorships in the 400 largest business enterprises. Percentages for the other universities studied appear in Table 19.

#### MAJOR OFFICES AND DIRECTORSHIPS IN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Major offices or directorships in financial institutions of all types formed a substantial component of the general picture. In this class of business were included banks, trust companies, insurance companies of all kinds, brokerage houses, stock exchanges and boards of trade, and similar organizations. Forty-six percent of the governing board members were found to hold offices or directorships, or both, in one or more such financial institutions; 28 percent, in 2 or more; and 16 percent, in 3 or more. The 338 trustees holding such positions occupied a total of 848 offices or directorships, an average of 2.5 each. Those holding 3 or more positions of this type averaged 4.5 positions per trustee. The number of board members thus closely connected with the administration of finan-

cial institutions was 3 times the total number of bankers on these boards. Together, bankers and officers and directors of financial institutions composed practically half of the membership of these boards.<sup>7</sup> As in previous comparisons the nongovernmental universities were the more conspicuous with regard to business affiliations, since 49 percent of their trustees occupied major offices or directorships in financial institutions, as compared with 40 percent for state universities.

Among the 200 largest financial organizations, 55 percent of the commercial banks included had one or more major officers or directors who were among the trustees of these 30 universities; similarly, 47 percent of the life insurance companies had such officials, 31 percent of the savings banks, and 30 percent of the other types of financial organizations. As in other business relationships, the nongovernmental boards exceeded the state university boards, the former having 23 percent of their members who were officials of one or more of the 200 largest financial institutions, in contrast to only 6 percent for the latter. All the 16 private university boards, but only 5 of the 14 state university boards, had one or more members who were officials in one of the 200 largest financial institutions.

Among the 734 trustees of these 30 leading universities were 3 directors of the National City Bank, one of whom was its president; 3 officials of the Chase National Bank; 3 directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York; 5 directors of the Philadelphia National Bank; 4 officials of the First National Bank of Chicago; 4 officials of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, one of whom was the chairman of the bank's board; 3 directors of the First National Bank of St. Louis; 5 officials of the Security-First National Bank of Los Angeles, one of whom was chairman of the bank's board, and also an additional official who was the husband of a woman member of a university governing board; 3 directors of the Anglo-California National Bank of San Francisco, one of whom was chairman of the bank's board; and 4 partners in J. P. Morgan and Company, one of whom was the son of J. P. Morgan. Also, numerous large savings banks each had several directors among the 734 trustees of the 30 universities. Similarly, the 734 board members included 6 directors of the New York Life Insurance Company, 2 of whom were university presidents; 2 directors of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; 7 officials of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, one of whom was trustee of 2 of the 30 universities; and 4 directors of the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company, one of whom was the president.

More indirect and less easily counted ramifications of university-business relationships were legion. A special analysis revealed, for example, that, aside from the 4 Morgan partners among the 734 trustees, 32 of the



trustees studied sat on one or more corporation boards along with a Morgan partner. Twelve university boards, all of privately controlled universities, included one or more trustees with such a direct contact with a Morgan partner. The University of Pennsylvania had 4 such trustees; Princeton, 6; and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 7. Clearly, opportunities for frequent personal and business contacts with Morgan partners were thus widely available to the trustees of these nongovernmental universities.<sup>8</sup> Doubtless, similar relationships with other major enterprises could be demonstrated.

#### MAJOR OFFICES AND DIRECTORSHIPS IN PUBLIC-UTILITY ENTERPRISES

Public-utility enterprises formed a second important component of the general totals. This category was considered to include the following types of organizations, when privately owned and profit seeking: electric companies, gas companies, water companies, steam and electric railroads and urban transportation systems, bus companies, telephone systems, telegraph companies, radio broadcasting corporations, trucking firms, ship lines, and other similarly situated businesses.<sup>9</sup> Major offices or directorships occupied by trustees were not as numerous in public utilities as in financial institutions. Seventy-nine percent of the board members held no leading executive office or directorship in a public-utility enterprise; 21 percent held one or more; 12 percent, 2 or more; and 8 percent, 3 or more. The 154 trustees who held such positions occupied a total of 456 offices or directorships in public-utility enterprises, of which 328 were held by 57 individuals, an average of nearly 6 public-utility positions for each trustee in this top group. Twenty-four percent of the board members of privately controlled universities occupied such positions, but only 15 percent of the board members of state universities. The California Institute of Technology board ranked highest with 50 percent of its membership holding such public-utility positions, while Johns Hopkins ranked second with 47 percent.

One hundred and four of these positions, or nearly a third, were held in the 96 public-utility organizations classified among the 400 largest business organizations in the country. Thus these colossal companies averaged slightly more than one representative each on these university boards. Fifty-four percent of the railroads, 49 percent of the power companies, and 60 percent of the communication companies in this select list of mammoth enterprises had as one or more of their officers or directors a person who was at the same time a trustee of one of these 30 leading universities.

Among the board members of these universities were 5 directors of the

Southern California Edison Company, one of whom was its president; 3 directors of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company; 3 directors of the Pacific Lighting Corporation, one of whom was the president; 4 directors of the United Gas Improvement Company, one of whom was the chairman of the firm's board and also its president; and 6 directors of Stone & Webster, Inc., of whom one was chairman of the corporation's board and another, vice-chairman of the board.<sup>10</sup>

The officials of a number of railroads were also on the governing boards of these 30 universities. Included were 5 officials of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, one of whom was its president; 3 directors of the Chicago and North Western Railway, one of whom was its president, and another of whom was a trustee of 2 of the 30 universities; 2 directors of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford and also its ex-president, who was president and director of the Association of American Railroads; 5 officials of the Pennsylvania Railroad; 3 officials of the Reading Company, including the chairman of the Reading board and also the chairman of its executive committee; 3 directors of the Southern Pacific Company, and also one director who was a trustee of a prominent professional school which is an affiliate of one of the 30 universities. In addition, 3 directors of Pullman, Inc., were trustees of these universities. In the communications field, likewise, 6 trustees held prominent positions with radio firms, 2 of them serving the National Broadcasting Company.

The top corporation in the Bell System, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, presents an outstanding example of a great<sup>11</sup> utility enterprise with extensive university connections. The Federal Communications Commission reported that, as of November 1, 1935,

men connected with the Bell System in the capacity of executive officers or directors have responsible and controlling positions in the councils of 69 universities and colleges in the United States, including most of the well-known major institutions. In 14 of those 69 institutions, there were at least two Bell representatives in various capacities, and in eight others, there were three or more Bell representatives. . . .

In addition to representation in these accredited colleges and universities, Bell officers and employees are represented in various capacities in scores of lesser schools and other educational foundations. The list of these institutions is too extensive to append to this study.<sup>12</sup>

The report listed the connections of 35 Bell officers with 15 of the 30 universities included in this study, and cited 27 of the Bell officers as holding trusteeships in one or more of 14 of these universities. The president of the top company was a trustee of 2 of these 30 universities, as was also an important figure in a subsidiary company. At Harvard alone, 10 officers or directors of Bell companies held various supervisory posi-

tions, including 10 memberships on visiting committees. Four of the 10 were members of Harvard's bicameral governing board. Additional numerous and intricate ties between universities and other major public utilities doubtless could be traced if sufficient effort were devoted to the task.

#### MAJOR OFFICES AND DIRECTORSHIPS IN PUBLISHING ENTERPRISES

Of the various smaller businesses, publishing enterprises were singled out for special analysis because of the particular influence of this industry on public opinion and public policy. Officers or directors of publishing enterprises, however, were not found in any great numbers on these university boards. Only 6 percent of the trustees held such positions of importance in publishing organizations, while these occupied a total of only 79 offices or directorships in that field.<sup>13</sup> Three-fourths of this group were connected with only one such enterprise. Only 4 trustees, or 0.5 percent of the total, held leading positions in 3 or more publishing enterprises, but these 4 held a total of 28 such offices or directorships, or an average of 7 each. Included among the prominent newspapers that trustees served in an important policy-making capacity was the *Chicago Daily News*, principal stockholder of which was the late Frank Knox. Four trustees included in this study were directors of this newspaper, one of these 4 being a trustee of 2 of the 30 universities. In contrast to the usual pattern of business relationships, percentages for nongovernmental universities in this connection were closely similar to those for state universities, although figures for 4 state universities were approximately double or more the maximum found for any private university. Since no publishing firm qualified for inclusion among the 400 largest business organizations in the country, tabulations for these large enterprises omit reference to this industry.

#### MAJOR OFFICES AND DIRECTORSHIPS IN OTHER BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

The residual group of nonbanking firms was composed of steel companies, oil corporations, coal companies, manufacturing concerns (including sugar refineries, tobacco firms, and meat packing houses), amusement concerns, retail firms, and miscellaneous other businesses. Leading positions with enterprises of these types were relatively numerous among the trustees. Fifty percent were officers or directors, or both, in one or more such enterprise; 33 percent, in 2 or more; and 24 percent, in 3 or more. The 176 trustees in this top group held a total of 1,021 offices or directorships in such enterprises, an average of almost 6 per trustee. For the total group, the number of such leading positions held was 1,273.



Again the usual contrast between nongovernmental and state universities was apparent, the percentage of board members of each group holding offices or directorships in other types of business being 55 and 39 percent, respectively. Washington University again stood at the top of the list with 87 percent of its board members occupying such positions, followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology with 75 percent. Of the state universities, Ohio State ranked highest with 57 percent holding such major offices. No such connections were found for the University of Nebraska, and both Clark and Catholic Universities also showed the exceptionally low rate of 13 percent each.

The list of the 400 largest business organizations in the country included 104 organizations in this miscellaneous category. Twenty-nine percent of the oil companies on this list of mammoth concerns, 60 percent of the steel companies, 57 percent of other industrial companies, and 55 percent of the merchandising and miscellaneous organizations had one or more officers or directors who were likewise among the trustees of these 30 major universities. Ninety-five offices or directorships among these 104 colossal firms were occupied by men who were also trustees of these universities.

Since data for these miscellaneous giant firms were consolidated with those for public-utility organizations in the preparation of Table 19, percentages for trustees of specific universities holding offices in these industries are not available. Doubtless, it is significant, however, that corresponding figures covering the 200 largest nonbanking enterprises as a whole revealed the usual contrast between nongovernmental and state universities. Twenty percent of the members of privately controlled university boards held leading offices in these corporations, but only 4 percent of the members of state university boards. Fifteen private university boards but only 6 state university boards included at least one official serving one or more of the 200 largest nonbanking corporations.

Various large and prominent enterprises within this miscellaneous category had several officials among the trustees of these 30 universities. Included were 3 officials of the United States Steel Corporation, one of whom was chairman of the steel corporation board and its chief executive officer, and another who was a governing board member of 2 of the 30 universities; 5 directors of the duPont Company, of whom one was president, 2 were vice presidents, and a fourth was chairman of the board; 5 directors of the International Harvester Company, one of whom was chairman of the board; 6 officials of the General Electric Company, one of whom was its president; 5 directors of General Motors Corporation, of whom one was president and chairman of the executive commit-

tee, and another, chairman of the board; 4 officials of the United Fruit Company, one of whom was its president; 4 directors of the Phelps-Dodge Corporation, one of whom was its president; and 3 directors of the Kennecott Copper Company.<sup>14</sup>

Altogether, the evidence of major university-business connections at high levels seems overwhelming. The numerous high positions of power in industry, commerce, and finance held by at least two-thirds of the members of the governing boards of these 30 leading universities would appear to give a decisive majority more than ample grounds for identifying their personal interests with those of business. Approximately one-fourth of the trustees held numerous and important key positions in the 400 largest business enterprises in the country and consequently exercised substantial control in the economic realm. The available facts, considered as a whole, would seem to give substantial support to Veblen's charge of nearly three decades ago when he declared: "The final discretion in the affairs of the seats of learning is entrusted to men who have proved their capacity for work that has nothing in common with the higher learning."<sup>15</sup>

## CHAPTER X

### AGES OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*The impression gained from these meetings [with board members of thirty-five colleges] is that the boards in this group of colleges are very largely dominated by trustees who are too old to be able to exercise a satisfactory control over a modern educational institution. Many of these trustees have passed the time of life when they can be receptive to new ideas. A college is primarily a service institution for youth; for it to be too largely dominated by the ideas of old age is unwise. A sounder policy would provide for a fairly even representation of all ages on the board, some of the members being relatively young, the majority middle-aged, and only a few in the older ages—FLOYD W. REEVES, JOHN DALE RUSSELL, et al.<sup>1</sup>*

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AGES OF TRUSTEES

STUDENTS of the problem of university control generally have favored a governing board that is well balanced as to age groups. Many have shown particular concern that such boards shall not consist of a high proportion of elderly persons.<sup>2</sup> It is argued that in times of rapid social change the ideas and values held by one generation usually differ substantially from those of the next and that an increasing conservatism and opposition to change commonly accompany advancing years.<sup>3</sup> Since institutions of higher learning exist to serve youth, it is particularly important that those in charge of policy formation understand the distinctive needs and point of view of youth and be sufficiently flexible to provide for the necessary adjustments to changing economic and social conditions. Too marked a gap between the ages of board members and those of the student body may be expected to influence adversely the outlook and orientation of the administration. Because of the importance of this problem, the age composition of the governing boards of the 30 leading universities is examined in the present chapter to determine the extent to which this distribution conforms to the recommendations of students of higher education. Treatment of the closely related subject of the number of years served is reserved for the next chapter.

#### BASIC FINDINGS AS TO THE AGES OF TRUSTEES

Fortunately, from one source or another, age information was found for 95 percent of the 734 trustees studied. Their ages, as of December 31,



1934, ranged from a minimum of 30 years to a maximum of 87. Only 4 percent of the trustees of known age were under 40 and only 22 percent, under 50. In contrast, 47 percent were 60 years of age or over; 18 percent, 70 or over; and 2 percent, 80 or over. Both the average and the median age for the entire group was 59 years. For those 33 trustees known to have retired from their occupation,<sup>4</sup> the median age was 67.<sup>5</sup> If adults under 40 can be regarded as relatively young, adults 40 to 60 as middle-aged, and adults 60 and up as in the older ages, the actual age distribution of these trustees admittedly differs substantially from that recommended by the authors of *The Liberal Arts College* quoted at the head of this chapter. Instead of "only a few," the upper age range thus defined contained 47 percent of all the trustees of these 30 leading universities. In fact, if the University of Chicago procedure of retiring governing board members from active voting rights at the age of 70<sup>6</sup> had been in effect at all 30 institutions at the time of the study, a total of 124 of the trustees studied would have been replaced by younger persons.

Moreover, board members of ripe age clearly characterized private universities to a greater extent than state universities. Fifty-two percent of the members of privately controlled boards were 60 years of age or more, but only 36 percent of the members of state boards; likewise, 20 percent of this group were at or above the Chicago retiring age of 70, as compared with 13 percent of the members of state university boards. Similarly, over three-fourths of the retired trustees were members of boards of nongovernmental universities. Only 17 percent of the members of nongovernmental boards were under 50 and only 2 percent, under 40, as contrasted with 32 percent and 7 percent of the state board members in these two respective age groups. The median ages of the two groups also differed by 4 years. Even the eldest trustee among the private universities was 5 years the senior of the eldest on a state board. Possibly these differences by type of university are due in part to life tenure policies more prevalent among private than among state universities.<sup>7</sup>

The various specific universities studied differed even more widely in the age composition of their boards than did those two types (see Table 20). Washington University, whose trustees had a median age of 69 years, ranked highest in age level. Boards with a median age of 64 or above included 5 privately controlled universities (Washington University, California Institute of Technology, Stanford, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Pennsylvania), but only 2 state universities (the Universities of California and Michigan). Three-quarters of the trustees of Johns Hopkins and two-thirds of the trustees of Columbia and of the University of California were 60 or over. Johns Hopkins, with 24 percent of its board members in the retired category, showed the highest percentage of retired

persons as trustees of any university studied.<sup>8</sup> At the opposite pole were the Universities of Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Chicago, all of which had a mere three-tenths or less of their trustees in the group 60 or above. Six of the 14 state university boards each had 8 percent or more of their members under 40 years of age, while the highest percentage under 40 on the board of any privately controlled university was 7 percent, the figure for the University of Chicago, which not many years ago enacted regulations to retire board members when they reached the age of 70. All 6 trustees who were 85 years of age or more were members of the boards of nongovernmental universities. Of these, Brown had 2; Washington University, 2; Cornell, one; and the University of Pennsylvania, one. On the other hand, half of the 8 trustees under 35 were on a single state university board—that of the University of North Carolina. The other 4 in this youngest group were distributed one each among Northwestern University, Brown, Harvard, and Princeton. Such detailed data for specific universities are, of course, illustrative only and may not reflect any permanent condition, for the age composition of a particular board is subject to considerable fluctuation as the passing of time brings retirements, deaths, and new appointments.

These evidences of the generally advanced age level of the governing boards suggest a related question: Were these trustees already elderly at the time of their original appointment to these boards, or had they grown old in office? Some light is thrown on this query by a special tabulation of the age at accession of those trustees among the 734 whose board membership first began in 1930 or later. A total of 267 trustees with known date of birth were found to have begun service on one of the 30 governing boards between January 1, 1930, and the end of the academic year 1934-35. For this group the median age at the time of accession was 52 years,<sup>9</sup> a fact that suggests that in general these board members were selected for membership at a time in the life span that usually coincides with, or follows, the achievement of positions of importance in the business or professional world, but precedes senescence.<sup>10</sup> Although typical, this age period for the first appointment was not universal. One member was first selected for office at the early age of 26 years, while another was first chosen at the advanced age of 82.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, at least, in many instances, the relatively advanced ages of the trustees as of the date of study must have been due to their long tenure in office rather than to a late original appointment. This relationship is well illustrated by the extreme case of the oldest trustee in the group, a man 87 years old at the time of the study, who had served on the Brown University board continuously since the age of 50. If, as is commonly the case, original appointments are made in the fifties, and if policies of long terms or life tenure prevail, the

consequence is inevitably a board whose age composition fails to meet the standards recommended by students of higher education.

#### AGES OF TRUSTEES COMPARED WITH THOSE OF CERTAIN OTHER GROUPS

Other studies have provided only scattered information on the age composition of college and university boards. Most important of various possible comparisons is that with Counts' findings for state universities a decade earlier, summarized in Table 21. The state university boards he studied showed a lower median age, and also a larger percentage of trustees in their fifties and considerably fewer 70 and above, than did the state universities in the present study. Likewise, a comparison with an unpublished study in 1930-31 of 55 colleges and universities in the North Central Association<sup>12</sup> indicates that the trustees of those institutions were somewhat younger than those in the present study, although a difference in categories prevents close comparisons. Similarly, a study of the trustees of 16 Lutheran colleges in the late nineteen-twenties<sup>13</sup> disclosed that their median age was 52 years, or 7 years below that for trustees in the present study. Thus such comparisons with other colleges and universities as are feasible all show trustees in the present study to be in general the oldest. Whether the differences are due to a trend toward older members on university boards or are due to the types of institutions covered cannot be determined from available data. The widespread use of life tenure, together with the lengthening span of life, nevertheless suggests the probability of such a trend unless obscure counterbalancing forces have been at work.

Studies of governing boards in charge of other areas of public education have shown the median ages of such board members to be markedly less than that for the trustees of these 30 leading universities. Counts, for example, reported the median age of nearly 3,000 members of city boards of education as 48.3 years, and that of 283 members of county boards of education likewise as 48.3,<sup>14</sup> while Struble found the median age of a group of 888 members of county boards of education to be 48.4 years.<sup>15</sup>

Another possible comparison is that between the boards of private philanthropic foundations, as reported by Coffman, and the boards of the privately controlled universities. The basic facts are again summarized in Table 21, although they must be utilized with particular caution because of the high proportion of unknown ages in Coffman's data. If his findings fairly represent the age composition of such boards,<sup>16</sup> the privately controlled university boards in this study again were the older even in comparison with foundation boards,<sup>17</sup> whose orientation and benefactors both are commonly considered conservative.



Age averages for those who have achieved distinction in other fields provide a further yardstick with which to judge the relative age level of the trustees of these 30 leading universities. In a study by Taussig and Joslyn of persons occupying positions as major executives, partners, or sole owners in a business of more than local importance in its field, the average and the median age of such business leaders was found to be 51 years<sup>18</sup>—a figure substantially lower than that for the present study and closely similar to the age of these trustees at the time of their original appointment. Likewise, in comparison with these board members, the age distributions for these business leaders (see Table 21) showed a much larger proportion in the younger age groups. Similarly, the median age of persons listed for the first time in a recent issue of *Who's Who in America* was 51 years.<sup>19</sup> The age level of political leaders at that time was also lower than that of these trustees. In 1935, the base year of this study, the median age of members of the 48 state legislatures was 48.2 years;<sup>20</sup> that of the United States House of Representatives, 49 years; and that of the United States Senate, 57 years<sup>21</sup>—all figures below that for the trustee group as a whole. On the other hand, members of the United States Supreme Court, as of December 31, 1934, showed the high median age of 72 years, a circumstance which later figured prominently in a national controversy. Six years later, the median age even of this august body had fallen through resignations, deaths, and new appointments to 58 years of age,<sup>22</sup> a level again below the median for nongovernmental universities in this study.

The contrast of the age distribution of the general population with that for trustees is more marked than that with distinguished leaders in business, the professions, education, and politics. Even when all persons under 30 are excluded from the computations as presumably too immature for board membership, the general population above this age line averaged 47 years of age in 1930, and showed a median age of 45 years.<sup>23</sup> An examination of the age curve for the general population also would reveal a concentration at the lower age levels where the fewest are chosen for board membership. Thus the age composition of these governing boards is in no sense typical of that of the general adult population of the country.

The results of these various comparisons, together with the actual distinguished biographical records of these trustees,<sup>24</sup> suggest, or are consistent with, the theory that persons are generally selected for university governing boards after they have attained a substantial measure of prominence or distinction in some field.<sup>25</sup> Such a practice, if consistently followed, would constitute an important influence in maintaining a high

age level among university trustees. Another factor that could operate simultaneously, and which might also contribute to the high age level observed, would be a deliberate preference, among those selecting new board members, for persons in their fifties or sixties at the time of appointment. Thus Elliott, Chambers, and Ashbrook point out that when boards fill vacancies caused by death among their own membership, they tend to fill the places with men of the same generation.<sup>26</sup> Selection on the basis of economic status or with a view to encouraging a possible bequest to the university could also explain in part the observed age distribution.<sup>27</sup> Whatever the reasons, however, the generally high age level of these governing boards appears a well established fact and one that may be presumed to affect in major fashion the determination of basic university policy.

#### FACTORS TENDING TO ENHANCE THE PRESTIGE OF TRUSTEES 60 OR OVER

Not only were trustees of age 60 or over particularly numerous on these governing boards, but they probably also enjoyed a measure of prestige and influence in board affairs in excess of their relative numbers. Although direct substantiation of this inference is lacking, various additional facts about this age group gleaned from special tabulations make this appear a very reasonable assumption. Particularly significant is the fact that although trustees of 60 or over constituted only 47 percent of the membership of these boards, they held 68 percent of the board's offices and thus were in a position to exert an especially strong influence on the board's deliberations. Likewise, this older age group had the advantage of intimate knowledge of university affairs gained from a relatively long period of board service, for the average length of service of those 60 or over was 15.6 years, as contrasted with 6.4 years for those under 60. Under these circumstances, their younger colleagues presumably would have given more than average weight to their judgments and recommendations. Furthermore, since 91 percent of the retired persons on these boards were at these age levels, a number in this age group also must have had the added advantage of ample leisure time, which in many cases could readily have been devoted to the close study of the needs and problems of the university. Evidence of diligent study of board problems would again have lent special weight to the recommendations of retired trustees at these upper age levels.

In addition to the advantages of numbers, office, long experience, and time for university affairs, trustees of 60 or over probably enjoyed the usual deference accorded to advanced years. Moreover, for these particular trustees, special distinction by reason of occupation, income, social

status, and business connections doubtless served to enhance the prestige customarily accorded to their age group. These older trustees belonged, for example, in unusual numbers to certain occupations granted by society a special measure of respect and deference. Although only 47 percent of the board members as a whole were 60 years of age or over, 56 percent of the bankers, 58 percent of the judges, 52 percent of the manufacturers, 69 percent of the physicians and surgeons, and 59 percent of the Catholic clergymen on these boards were 60 or over. In contrast, only 36 percent of the public officials, 39 percent of the lawyers, and 18 percent of the non-Catholic clergymen on these boards belonged to this age group. In general, persons in the professions were particularly numerous in the groups for ages 45 or below, while at many higher age levels, business men were more numerous. Of the occupationally retired trustees, over half were retired bankers or manufacturers. The incomplete data on income and salary make conclusions regarding them very hazardous. Nevertheless, the fact that income or salary information was found for 49 percent of those 60 or over, but for only 36 percent of those under 60,<sup>28</sup> is doubtless suggestive of a corresponding income advantage for the older group since the sources used were such as to reveal in the main only incomes or salaries in the upper brackets. If social status rather than occupation or income were the criteria applied, the group age 60 or over could still be said to enjoy a particularly favored position since 42 percent of all trustees 60 or over were listed in *The Social Register Locator*, 1935,<sup>29</sup> as compared with only 24 percent of those under 60.

Those 60 or over were also conspicuous in offices or directorships in business enterprises. While 47 percent of all trustees were 60 or over, 55 percent of those holding 3 or more offices or directorships in financial institutions were in this age group, and 70 percent of those holding 3 or more offices in public-utility enterprises. Among those 175 trustees occupying major offices or directorships in the 400 largest business enterprises, a high age level was especially marked. Only 8 percent of all board members under 40 were officials in one or more of the 400 largest corporations, while each older age group showed a progressively larger percentage of members holding major executive positions in such corporations to a maximum of 32 percent among board members in their 60's; thereafter the percentage declined to 27 among trustees 70 or over. Similar age patterns characterized trustees who were officials of the 200 largest financial organizations, the 96 largest public-utility corporations, and the 104 other largest businesses, which together composed the list of 400.

Such numerous and important business connections, when added to the other effective sources of prestige and influence enumerated, must



have given those 60 or over a degree of power in board affairs considerably beyond that adjudged advantageous by students of higher education. When it is recalled, in addition, that trustees at these age levels constituted nearly half the total membership of these boards, there can be little doubt as to the generation in control of the deliberations of the governing boards of these 30 leading universities.

## CHAPTER XI

### SEX, RESIDENCE, AND REGION OF BIRTH OF GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*Business and the professions are not the only suitable training grounds for lay leadership in higher education. As long as American farms continue to be homes as well as businesses, as long as farming remains a way of life as well as a means of obtaining a living, there will be a whole set of distinctive values in our rural culture which will continue to make it a prolific incubator of intelligent and resourceful leadership. . . .*

*Furthermore, there are many semi-professions and relatively new professions in which meritorious service may not command wide publicity, but which tend to develop in their practitioners certain habits and qualities well adapted to educational statesmanship. One of these is "social work," engaged in by women as well as men, and including service of diverse types in connection with a wide variety of social-welfare organizations. Such work involves intimate contact with situations wherein the imperfections of our social order are glaringly exposed; and in the better type of worker it tends to develop qualities of social sympathy tempered with awareness of practical limitations—M. M. CHAMBERS.<sup>1</sup>*

#### SEX OF BOARD MEMBERS

THE INCREASED proportion of women university students and the growing participation of women in business and the professions lend special importance to the findings as to the sex composition of university governing boards. Women students at a university pose problems peculiar to their sex in the fields of curriculum, vocational preparation, health, housing, and social adjustment that demand sympathetic and understanding consideration for their solution. Clearly also, the sex of board members must influence the point of view and social outlook with which trustees approach these problems. For these reasons the need for the representation of women on the governing boards of co-educational institutions is often frankly recognized by scholars of university government, and is seldom challenged in the literature except by a few conservatives.<sup>2</sup> What, then, are the facts regarding the representation of women on the governing boards of these 30 leading universities?

Of the 734 trustees included, only 25, or 3.4 percent, were women. Twenty-three of these were members of the boards of state universities, of

whose membership they constituted 9.5 percent, while the other 2 women were members of the boards of private institutions, of which they formed only 0.4 percent. The two private universities having one woman board member each were Northwestern University and Cornell. Among the public universities, the University of North Carolina board included 11 women trustees; the boards of the Universities of Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, 2 each; and the boards of the Universities of California, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Virginia, one each. Eighteen of the universities studied, or 60 percent, had no women on their governing boards.

This scarcity of women board members does not reflect the absence of women on the staffs or in the student bodies of these institutions. Of the 18 universities without women on their boards, 16 regularly admit women students.<sup>3</sup> The governing boards of these 16 had in their charge at the time of the study 31 percent of the graduate women students of the nation, as contrasted with only 20 percent under the jurisdiction of the 12 boards that did include women trustees among their members. Together, the 28 boards of institutions admitting women students controlled the education of 78,000 women enrolled in their regular sessions in 1935-36 and 54,000 women in their summer sessions, or 16 and 19 percent respectively of the national total of women pursuing higher education during these periods. The institutions governed by these boards not only enrolled 51 percent of the women graduate students in that year, but also employed 13 percent of all women members of college and university faculties.<sup>4</sup> Clearly women were not represented on the boards of these leading universities in proportion to their numbers among students and faculty.

Neither is the underrepresentation of women on governing boards peculiar to these prominent universities. While only 4 other studies that were found reported statistics on the sex composition of university governing boards,<sup>5</sup> these covered different samplings of universities and thus contribute to a more general picture. All confirm the overwhelming dominance of the male sex on governing boards. The United States Office of Education survey of land-grant colleges and universities, for example, disclosed that of 644 board members in 45 such institutions, 5 percent were women.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, Counts found that of a total of 380 board members of 42 state colleges and universities, 29, or 7.6 percent, were women, while Nearing found 7 percent on state boards and 3 percent on private boards.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, a survey by Reeves and Russell of 35 colleges affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church noted that although 34 of these colleges admitted women students, 14, or 40 percent, had no women members on their governing boards, and only 3 had women trustees to the extent of 10 percent or more.<sup>8</sup>



Apparently the omission of women from the boards of institutions of higher learning is a general condition and must be presumed to reflect nation-wide attitudes among persons who select board members. "To an observer unfamiliar with the patriarchal tradition of our society," wrote Counts, "perhaps the most striking fact . . . is the severe discrimination against woman."<sup>9</sup> Possibly those who select or appoint trustees accept this tradition without reflection; possibly they believe the direct representation of women's interests unimportant and indirect representation through fathers and husbands, a satisfactory substitute; or again they may regard women as unqualified for this office. Other evidence of a general unwillingness to entrust major governmental responsibilities to women is found in the composition of the United States Congress. At the time of this study, women composed but 1.3 percent of this bicameral body, and only 1.7 percent of the combined membership of the 48 state legislatures.<sup>10</sup> Coffman also found that of the 565 trustees of the 55 foundations he studied, 77, or 13.6 percent, were women,<sup>11</sup> while Lindeman found only 11 women, or 2.7 percent, among the members of foundation boards whose biographies he analyzed.<sup>12</sup> Thus even the low percentage of women characteristic of the public university boards in the present study compares favorably with corresponding figures for these other governing bodies. On the other hand, the almost total absence of women on the private university boards stands out as the extreme case of all those cited.

Pressing further for significant details regarding this small band of women trustees, one might ask: What types of women are these select few who are permitted to share in the government of these universities? Twelve of the 25 were found to be homemakers. Thus a certain minimum representation for this very important segment of the activities of the nation was provided. Of the others, 3 were state officials; one was a physician; one, a worker in vocational guidance and social work; one, a choir director, formerly a teacher; one, a retired secretary of a private women's college; one, a textile manufacturer; and one, a retired securities broker. The other 4 could not be readily classified, but possibly it is significant that one of these 4 had been very active in broadening the scope of education and in making education available to various groups. Not much is known of the family income of these women. Net taxable income figures were found for only 5 of them or their husbands, and a salary for one additional husband. Nevertheless, the known income of these 6 couples alone was sufficiently large so that if it had been divided equally among all 25, each would have received about \$30,000 a year. With complete information, this average doubtless would have been considerably higher. Only 2 of the women were directors or officers of corporations, and none held such a position in any of the 400 largest businesses. The median age

of the women<sup>13</sup> was 59 years, the same as that for board members as a whole. Although these small numbers hardly warrant generalizations, they do suggest that in comparison with male trustees, these women were somewhat less intimately identified with large-scale business and rather more active in homemaking and social welfare, broadly interpreted.

#### URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE OF BOARD MEMBERS

Like one's sex role, the urban or rural character of one's daily environment also contributes significantly to one's point of view and system of values. The differing demands of urban and rural dwellers have long been a recognized factor in politics. Almost every major election or Congressional debate brings renewed evidence of this contrast. Conflicting urban and rural needs compete for attention likewise in university circles. Admission requirements, curricula, university fees, living costs, and rules governing academic progress all too easily may discriminate against the youth from the farm and the rural high school if those responsible are not ever mindful of the special needs and problems of this group. Since final decisions in these matters commonly rest with the trustees, the types of home and neighborhood environment with which board members identify themselves may have profound social implications for the future of rural youth.

Table 22 summarizes present findings in this regard. It is evident that when board selections are made, rural residents constitute still another forgotten group.<sup>14</sup> At the time of this study, 95 percent of the 734 trustees included lived in urban areas. Urban residents constituted 99 percent of the governing board membership of the private universities studied and 85 percent in the case of the state universities. These figures contrast sharply with the nation's population as a whole, for in 1930, only 56 percent of persons of all ages, and less than half of those under 20, lived in urban areas.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, not a single board member of 14 of the 16 nongovernmental universities lived in the country, Brown University and Cornell being the only 2 such institutions having any board members with a rural residence.<sup>16</sup> Seven of the 14 state universities also had no rural residents as board members at that time, namely, the Universities of California, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia. Because of the special significance of rural background for board members in charge of institutions offering curricula in agriculture, an additional tabulation was made of the residences of trustees having authority over such schools. This revealed that city and town dwellers constituted 85 percent of the 245 board members in charge of the 11 institutions with curricula in agriculture.<sup>17</sup>

Not only did the 734 trustees covered by this study typically live in towns and cities; they also lived in substantial numbers in certain particular large cities. A few years ago Coffman demonstrated that 76 percent of the 282 foundation trustees for whom he obtained data lived in 8 cities.<sup>18</sup> Corresponding figures for the present study given in Table 22 are lower. Only 42 percent of the trustees of these universities lived in these same cities at the time of the study. Sixty percent of the trustees of private institutions lived in these 8 urban centers, but only 5 percent of those on state university boards, and only 11 percent of the trustees of institutions with curricula in agriculture. The particularly high figure for private institutions studied is doubtless due in part to the location of a number of these universities in these 8 cities.<sup>19</sup> Whether the high figure is significant apart from this circumstance cannot be determined without exceeding the scope of this study. For present purposes the important finding is that a relatively high proportion of the trustees of these leading private universities were subject in their daily living to influences peculiar to a few intensely urbanized centers. Such an environment cannot but affect their thinking and point of view on vital university issues. William B. Munro's characterization of "the modern city" as "a place where material motives fill the minds and govern the acts of men" suggests one of the possible directions of this influence.<sup>20</sup>

#### REGION OF BIRTH AND RESIDENCE<sup>21</sup>

Like urban-rural contrasts, regional differences also affect, but to lesser degree, the heritage of memories, habits of mind, and value judgments with which governing board members approach the responsibilities of trusteeship. Their experiences with the particular occupations, and with the standards, customs, and problems of living characteristic of their childhood or present home area must be assumed to influence to some degree their decisions as to which student, teaching, or research problems most urgently require the attention and funds of the university they govern. For this reason data on the regions of birth and present residence of trustees are believed a significant supplement to the urban-rural findings.

Table 23 gives the percentage distribution of the trustees studied by region of birth and residence, together with corresponding figures for the universities studied and the total population of the country. The concentration of trustees and universities in certain areas to the neglect of others is obvious. The New England area, for example, still appeared to retain a dominance in higher education out of proportion to its population and reminiscent of its earlier leadership in the history of American higher learning. Although at the time of this study it contained only 7



percent of the nation's population, this area claimed 17 percent of the universities in the country accepted for membership in the Association of American Universities, 14 percent of the total trustees of these universities by place of residence, and 19 percent of these same trustees by place of birth.<sup>22</sup> Representation of the Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and West North Central States on these boards was about proportional to their respective populations. The actual number of member universities in the Middle Atlantic States, however, was slightly low, and that in the West North Central, somewhat high. The apparent excess of trustees from the South Atlantic States is misleading since it resulted largely from the 102 trustees on the board of the University of North Carolina—much the largest board of any studied. Actually, the deep south is a much underprivileged area as far as higher education of the standard required for association membership is concerned, the University of North Carolina having the most southerly location of any university accepted for membership in this association with the single exception of the University of Texas. The neglected position of the Southern States in higher education<sup>23</sup> is more clearly reflected in the extremely low figures for the East South Central and West South Central areas. Likewise, the Mountain States were entirely without a member in this select university association, and were also practically without representation on the boards of the 30 leading universities located elsewhere. The Pacific area again was more adequately represented, their universities and trustees being about equal in proportion to their population. The typical picture noted elsewhere in this report of overrepresentation of the privileged groups and underrepresentation of the underprivileged thus appears to be repeated once again in these regional findings.

## CHAPTER XII

### MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ON GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

*There are several constructive elements which should belong to a governing, academic board. The first of these elements I shall call intellectual comprehensiveness. . . .*

*Moreover, the element of progressiveness has special value in the constitution of a college trustee. For academic boards are prone to conservatism. They are more inclined rather to accept the accumulations of the past laboriously gathered rather than to run the risk of a partial or complete loss of a yet richer good. . . . But it is ever to be remembered that the future of a college is longer than its past. The worth of the service in the centuries yet to be is richer than its worth won in the centuries completed—CHARLES F. THWING.<sup>1</sup>*

**T**O ROUND OUT the picture of the social and economic composition of governing boards, certain additional data are needed. This chapter presents briefly such facts as could be assembled relative to the education of these trustees, their family and church ties, their political orientation, and their civic, military, and social activities and status, together with other available evidence of their eminence and influence. To these are added a few statistics on the opinions of these trustees on certain controversial social issues as revealed in poll responses. Though incomplete, these combined facts are further suggestive both of the general quality of these key trustees and of their point of view and class affiliations.

#### EDUCATION

As indicated in Chapter VI, scholars are in general agreement as to the importance of background in higher education as a basis for membership on university governing boards. To these writers, the distinguished educational record of these trustees would doubtless be gratifying. Eighty-eight percent of the total were found definitely to have continued their education beyond the secondary school level, and most of the 7 percent whose educational record was unknown may also have done so. Only 3, or 0.4 percent, were definitely known not to have continued beyond the elementary school, and only 5 percent, not beyond high school. This rec-

ord compares very favorably with that of the adult population as a whole. Of persons 25 years of age or over in 1940, 60 percent had not continued beyond the eighth grade, and 89 percent, not beyond high school. Only 10 percent had studied at the college level.<sup>2</sup> By these standards, therefore, the trustees appear an exceedingly well educated group—in fact, so much so that critics<sup>3</sup> might be concerned over the almost total lack of representation of persons of low or average educational opportunity and achievement, and the consequent possibilities of class bias in board deliberations.

When compared with the educational record of the faculties of the universities they govern, the educational achievements of these trustees are less impressive. When faculty standards are high, as among these leading universities, the master's degree is typically the minimum required for faculty status, and the doctor's degree is insisted on for most positions of rank or importance. Nevertheless, among these trustees, only 9 percent were known to hold an earned doctor's degree, and another 10 percent, an earned master's degree without the doctorate. On the other hand, a total of 72 percent held an earned bachelor's degree, and 34 percent, one or more professional degrees. This showing of earned degrees, although impressive in comparison with nonacademic groups, would have been inadequate for the customary faculty degree roster of any major university.

Possibly it is significant also that honorary degrees were more than twice as numerous as earned doctor's degrees. A total of 187 trustees, or 25 percent, held one or more honorary degrees. For a few, the number of such honors was conspicuously high. For example, *Who's Who in America* for 1934-1935 lists 28 such degrees for A. Lawrence Lowell, 27 for Herbert Hoover, 20 for Charles E. Hughes, and 18 for James R. Angell—to mention only a few. Can these degrees be interpreted as suggesting not only the eminence and public recognition of these trustees, but also their point of view? Honorary degrees are commonly believed to be awarded only after a consideration, not only of the achievements of the candidate, but also of his basic "soundness" and social orientation. Because conservatism often seems to be among the qualifications for such degrees, one colorful writer has characterized holders of one common honorary degree, the LL.D., as follows:

The LL.D. list is not identifiable with present or future greatness but with an age that is dead or dying. The names are associated with past glories, if glories they be, and the whole thing suggests lavender and old lace. . . . Reaction is the salient characteristic of America's LL.D. roster.<sup>4</sup>

Whether this characterization can be fairly applied to holders of the LL.D. among this trustee group was not investigated.

Another significant educational analysis singled out those trustees who



were alumni of the institutions they helped to govern. Fifty-eight percent of the trustees of private universities were found to possess a degree from their own institutions, as compared with 42 percent of the public university trustees, and 53 percent of the group as a whole. These proportions of alumni would seem more than sufficient on the average to achieve the values sought by those who recommend alumni participation on boards, and so high in some cases as to risk inbreeding and narrowness in ideas and outlook.<sup>5</sup>

The educational analyses also confirmed further the generally higher level of privilege and status of members of private university boards. A larger proportion of private than of public university trustees had attended college; likewise larger proportions had received degrees of each type, including the honorary and professional degrees. The types of institutions attended by the two groups also contrasted sharply. Ninety-five percent of the private university trustees holding bachelor's degrees had received their first earned degree from a private college or university, but only 27 percent of the corresponding public university trustees. Even though this contrast was largely the result of a preference for their alumni by both types of universities,<sup>6</sup> the net effect was, nevertheless, that trustees in general were placed in charge of the same type of institution they had attended during their undergraduate years.

Another special tabulation followed a classification used by Lindeman in his study of trustees of representative foundations. According to Lindeman's figures, 61 percent of those foundation trustees known to hold bachelor's degrees had graduated from 18 prominent colleges and universities—mostly private.<sup>7</sup> Apparently those who select trustees for private universities share with the donors of great wealth and their legal representatives this special confidence in the graduates of these 18 select colleges and universities, inasmuch as the corresponding percentage for trustees of private universities in the present study was even higher. Seventy-six percent of the trustees of these institutions who held the bachelor's degree had graduated from this same list of 18 colleges and universities. On the other hand, the graduates of these select colleges among public university trustees constituted only 13 percent of the total with bachelor's degrees.<sup>8</sup> If it is true that colleges vary significantly in the type of education they provide, then the distinct differences in educational background between these two groups of trustees may signify important differences in outlook and points of view.

#### FAMILY AND RELIGIOUS TIES

Not only the experiences of a formal education, but also those that normally accompany the rearing of one's own family provide basic insight

and understanding needed by those who carry responsibility for decisions affecting profoundly the advanced education of other people's children. For this reason, available information on the family and children of these trustees was tabulated, even though incomplete. Of the 734 trustees studied, 602 reported themselves in available records as married or remarried; 36, as widowed; and 5, as divorced. Twenty-four were known to be unmarried. The marital status of another 67 was not reported, but it may be presumed that most of these were single, or at least without children. Of the 643 known to be married or to have been married, 96 reported 1 child; 146, 2 children; 132, 3 children; and 122, more than 3 children.<sup>9</sup> One family with 8 children was found, 10 with 7, and 9 with 6. No record of children was found for the other 146 among whom children might be expected; probably many of these had no children. If one makes the reasonable assumption that most of these families were "completed" families,<sup>10</sup> the total number of known living children of these 734 trustees, namely 1,359, was clearly insufficient to replace these trustees and their spouses with an equal number of persons in the next generation; in other words, these trustees were characterized by the low birth rate typical of educated and distinguished persons in general. Moreover, the proportion with experience in the rearing of children, namely 68 percent, would seem below the level desirable for members of governing boards in charge of the higher education of youth.

The religious loyalties and background of an individual are also important keys to his philosophy and outlook on life, and some would claim that they also commonly reflect his class affiliation as well. Available records unfortunately contained no indication of the religious affiliation or preference of 241 trustees, or one-third of the total. Of those of known church membership or preference, 417—an overwhelming majority—claimed a specific Protestant denomination; only 54 claimed the Roman Catholic church; and 9, the Jewish faith. Thirty-five of the 54 known Catholics were members of the board of Catholic University,<sup>11</sup> and 3 of the 9 Jewish members were on the board of the University of North Carolina. When totals excluding Catholic University were computed, both Catholic and Jewish members were found more numerous proportionately on public than on private boards. Within the Protestant group, the distribution of trustees was as follows: Episcopal, 126; Presbyterian, 88; Methodist, 61; Baptist, 60; Congregationalist, 31; Unitarian, 27; Quakers or Friends, 8; Lutheran, 5; Universalist, 4; Reformed Church, 2; Christian Church, 2; Disciples of Christ, 2; and Moravian, one. Three others specified only "Protestant." In addition, 2 trustees were Christian Scientists; one, a member of an Ethical Society; and one, of a Community Church. Only 6 definitely disclaimed any church ties. Tabulations by uni-

versity naturally reflected the present or previous denominational orientation of certain private universities, there being 30 known Baptists on the Brown board and 12 on the University of Chicago board, as well as 18 known Methodists on the Northwestern University board.

In comparison with the denominational distribution nationally, trustee selection in favor of Episcopalians and Presbyterians was especially conspicuous. While in 1936, Episcopalians constituted only 3.1 percent of all adult church members, and Presbyterians, only 4.5 percent,<sup>12</sup> these denominations together formed 43 percent of all trustees of known religious affiliation or preference. Commenting on a similar concentration of religious preferences among members of foundation boards, Lindeman wrote as follows:

Where there is no state church the various economic classes distribute themselves among religious bodies according to a class-conscious principle. In one sense, therefore, church affiliation, in our society, constitutes an index of class structure. In most American communities, for example, the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches represent wealth and privilege."

Whether or not this is also the explanation of the apparent denominational bias in the composition of these university governing boards, Lindeman's explanation at least appears consistent with present findings as to the economic composition.

#### POLITICAL ORIENTATION

One common rule-of-thumb method of classifying a person as "conservative," "liberal," or "radical" in his leanings is to inquire as to his politics. While this method has obvious limitations, the political views of an individual do reflect his economic and social philosophy, which in turn colors his approach to educational issues. What, then, were the party affiliations or leanings of these key trustees who govern America's leading universities? This question is easier to ask than to answer, for one's political views are at times purposefully kept off the public record. Nevertheless, such information as could be gathered fit together to provide a consistent, though not conclusive, answer. Available biographical records mentioned the party choices of 442 of the 734 trustees included in the study. In these statements, 259 trustees listed Republican connections or choices; 161, Democratic; and 22, some other designation. This miscellaneous group must not, however, be construed as socialist or third-party choices, for about half referred to themselves merely as "independent"; 2 mentioned "conservative"; one, "progressive"; 2, "liberal"; 2, "varying"; one, "anti-Roosevelt"; and one, "opposed to New Deal and all other weird doctrines."



A clue to the political leanings of the 292 trustees whose biographical records omitted entirely a political designation was found in their responses to the opinion poll,<sup>14</sup> in which 104 with unstated political affiliation reported their vote for president in 1932. These votes totalled 72 for Hoover, 31 for Roosevelt, and one for Thomas. For 194 others of known political choice, poll responses, compared with claimed political affiliation, served to confirm the general accuracy of their biographical declarations, for their poll vote in 1932 and their biographical statement of party agreed in about 9 cases out of 10.<sup>15</sup> These two sources of party information were therefore consolidated, using the poll vote information only when a party declaration was lacking. A party distribution for all except 188 of the trustees studied was thus achieved which may be considered roughly correct for the election year 1932.

These consolidated figures produced the following party totals: Republicans, 331, or 61 percent of those with known party preference; Democrats, 192, or 35 percent; and other, 23, or 4 percent. Internal evidence suggests, moreover, that if party choice information were available for the 188 for whom neither method produced information, the total group would be revealed to include at least as high a proportion of Republicans as the above evidence indicates—and probably higher.<sup>16</sup> Thus the 61 percent of Republicans among the trustees of known political affiliation or vote may be fairly contrasted with the distribution of the popular vote for president in the 1932 election. In that year only 40 percent of the popular vote was for a Republican president, while 57 percent voted for a Democratic president; and 2 percent, for a Socialist president.<sup>17</sup> Clearly these trustees held at that time much more conservative views on politics than the general population. It is further significant that the trend of political thought among these trustees between 1932 and 1936 apparently was the reverse of that for the country as a whole. Among the nation's voters, support for Roosevelt increased during this four-year period from 57 to 60 percent of the popular vote, but among those trustees who reported their votes on the opinion ballot (see Table 24), support for Roosevelt decreased from 36 percent in 1932 to only 26 percent four years later. Experience with social and economic reform and relief policies under New Deal leadership, which had drawn the popular electorate toward Roosevelt, had—it would seem—alienated this select group of trustees.

Pursuing the inquiry further, one might ask also: Which types of trustees were predominantly Republican and which, Democratic? Both the biographical information and the poll responses showed proprietors, managers, and officials to be more strongly Republican than professional workers. In both sources public universities also showed a strong Demo-

cratic majority and private universities, a strong Republican majority on their boards. More than half of the poll ballots from the following groups reported a Democratic presidential vote in 1932: (1) trustees under 40 years of age, (2) trustees whose known 1924 net taxable incomes were less than \$25,000, (3) trustees with bachelor's degrees from a public institution, and (4) women trustees reporting a major party vote. On the other hand, an overwhelming majority of poll responses from the following groups reported a Republican presidential vote in 1932: (1) trustees 50 years of age or over, (2) trustees with incomes of \$25,000 and over, (3) trustees with bachelor's degrees from a prominent college (Lindeman's list), and (4) trustees holding major executive offices or directorships in one of the country's 400 largest business corporations. Because of the large margin of unknowns, publication of detailed tabulations in these matters is not justified, but it is probably significant that findings in each case followed a pattern consistent with a priori expectations.

Still other evidence of the political composition of this trustee group is provided by the *Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures of Presidential, Vice Presidential, and Senatorial Candidates in 1936*.<sup>18</sup> This report listed 58 of the 734 trustees included in the present study and 10 of their wives as having contributed \$500 or more each to the election campaigns in that year. Fifty of these 58 trustees and all 10 of the wives listed had contributed to Republican federal or state senatorial campaigns, their contributions totalling \$358,284.50. Only 8 trustees and no trustee's wives had contributed \$500 or more to corresponding Democratic campaigns and the contributions of these 8 totalled only \$29,000.<sup>19</sup>

The political orientation of certain of the trustees studied is further revealed by the report in 1936 of the Special Senate Committee to Investigate Lobbying Activities,<sup>20</sup> which listed contributions by 700-odd individuals and firms to lobbying organizations during the preceding 18 months. This list included 37 persons who held 39 memberships on the boards of the leading universities studied.<sup>21</sup> These trustees were noted as contributing during this period a total of \$133,159.94 to 11 right-wing lobbying organizations, included among which were the American Liberty League, the National Economy League,<sup>22</sup> the Crusaders, the Farmers Independence Council, the New York State Economic Council, the Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution, and the Sentinels of the Republic. Data as to trustees' contributions to liberal or left-wing organizations, unfortunately, were less accessible. One neutral organization of liberal sponsorship, the American Civil Liberties Union, famous for its protective efforts in behalf of the civil liberties of persons of all shades of opinion granted the writer access to its records of 4,000 recent contribu-

tors. Only 5 of the 734 trustees studied were found, however, to have contributed to this organization between January 1, 1935 and July 1, 1936 and their combined gifts totalled only \$49.50.<sup>23</sup>

#### ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS, CIVIC ACTIVITIES, AND SOCIAL STATUS

An analysis of the activities which these trustees voluntarily chose to engage in apart from the direct and inescapable demands of their occupation can provide new and significant insight into their interests, cultural aims, typical associates, and social status. As Lindeman has written:

The manner in which leisure time is spent is, without doubt, a trustworthy index regarding a person's cultural aims. In American society the sociable factor is subtly interwoven with occupational and financial interests. To belong to a certain club is a mark of achievement and indicates that one has "arrived." But individuals often seek membership in clubs and organizations for the purpose of enhancing their business and professional opportunities. In the "right" club one meets the "right" people.<sup>24</sup>

Because of the implications of such information for the educational point of view of trustees, the biographical and directory records were again combed for facts relevant to association memberships, civic activities, and social status. Little or no biographical data were available for 61 trustees and for many others the biographical statements of these activities and connections were undoubtedly very incomplete. The resulting figures, therefore, considerably understate the true extent of these voluntary activities. Moreover, those that were included in the records did not lend themselves readily to classification in any sharply defined categories, for often a single club, like the Rotary, had business, professional, and civic aspects.

In spite of the inevitable understatements and inadequate classifications, the number and types of current memberships found listed for these trustees in these sources was truly impressive. Two hundred trustees mentioned memberships in "business" associations, including chambers of commerce, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Civitan, and Optimist Clubs. Five trustees were directors of the United States Chamber of Commerce at the national level, and 3 others were directors at the state or large-city level. Six were chairmen of national committees of the Chamber of Commerce, one was a member of the Senior Council, and one, a Vice President. Also 6 were members of the New York Stock Exchange, one of the Baltimore Stock Exchange, and one of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange.<sup>25</sup> Memberships in professional, learned, or technical associations<sup>26</sup> were listed by 351, or almost half, and membership in fraternal societies, such as the Masonic order and the Elks,<sup>27</sup> by 163. Over three-quarters (563) claimed



membership in at least one social organization or club, excluding the categories already listed; of these, 437 claimed membership in 3 or more such societies. Membership in 10 or more such societies was claimed by 55 trustees, and in 20 or more, by 6 trustees.

The specific memberships in social clubs cited in the biographical materials serve to identify further the social circles in which many of these trustees moved. Membership in the University Club was indicated by 220 trustees and in country clubs, yacht clubs, and hunting clubs, by 202. Forty-four trustees belonged to a Harvard Club, 23 to the Yale Club, 23 to the Princeton Club, 18 to the Brown University Club, and 16 to the Columbia Club. The Union League Club was mentioned by 69; the Century Club, by 53; the Union Club, by 43; and the Metropolitan Club, by 43. Other clubs listed by over 10 trustees each include: City Club, 28; Commercial Club, 26; Bankers Club, 24; Racquet Club, 21; Downtown Club, 19; Engineer's Club, 19; Racquet and Tennis Club, 16; Knickerbocker Club, 12; Cosmos Club, 12; and Republican Club, 11.<sup>28</sup> Apparently these trustees did not lack abundant opportunities to meet the "right" people socially.

The roster of their military and patriotic activities and offices was equally impressive, even though again incomplete. More than a third (273) listed a present or past membership, office, or title in a military or patriotic organization, or a special honor from such a source. Prominent among organizations listed were the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Pilgrims, the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Of the 273 trustees with such connections, 133 held one such connection; 52, 2 such connections; and 88, 3 or more such connections.<sup>29</sup>

A number of trustees also held, or had held, public office.<sup>30</sup> Even though the lists were incomplete, 100 mentioned that they held, or had held, one local public office (city, township, or county); 52 cited 2 such offices,<sup>31</sup> and 30, 3 or more. The total of trustees with known local public office experience was 182, or one-fourth the total studied. An even larger number—310—reported that they held, or had held, one or more state or national public offices or government positions,<sup>32</sup> 79 claiming 2 such offices, and 113, 3 or more.

Important educational or welfare responsibilities were also numerous. One hundred and twelve held, or had held, one or more trusteeships in colleges or universities other than the ones included in this study; 73 were, or had been, trustees or directors of private schools; and 196, or more than one-fourth, were, or had been, officers, directors, or trustees of welfare or charitable organizations or institutions, as for example, hospitals, children's homes, institutions for the handicapped or defective,

charity organizations, the Red Cross, community chests, etc. In addition, many trustees held, or had held, numerous offices, directorships, or trusteeships in civic, community, educational, or religious enterprises in categories or relationships not covered by preceding counts. Included in this miscellaneous group were trustees holding offices, directorships, or trusteeships in Y.M.C.A.'s, libraries, museums, observatories, educational institutions,<sup>33</sup> foundations,<sup>34</sup> and religious organizations. Of the 734 trustees studied, 116 listed one present or previous responsibility of this type; 75, 2 such; and 156, 3 or more. Thus approximately half of the trustees were holding, or had held, a position of responsibility and influence of this educational, religious, or civic type not elsewhere classified. For a significant minority, such responsibilities were numerous and diverse. One trustee reported that one-third of his working time was given to public or philanthropic work.

The many foundation trusteeships held by these university governing board members were particularly significant. Fifty-four trusteeships<sup>35</sup> in 29 foundations<sup>36</sup> were found to be held by these persons, among which were included trusteeships in foundations with wide influence in education. Three university board members held trusteeships in the General Education Board; 3, in the Rockefeller Foundation; 3, in the Carnegie Foundation; 5, in the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; and 5, in the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Thus the interests and activities of many trustees were clearly not confined to their immediate business or profession, but extended to welfare, civic, and religious activities in which not a few held responsible but unpaid positions of leadership. Almost without exception, however, these activities were of the more conventional ameliorative type. Evidence of leadership or even membership in organizations striving for social reform was remarkably slight.

Consistent with these activities and with these prominent and influential connections was the recognized social status accorded many of these trustees. Approximately one-third (232) were listed in *The Social Register Locater*, 1935,<sup>37</sup> the exclusive bluebook of American high society. Other social bluebooks listed 136 of the trustees.<sup>38</sup> The total classified in these sources as among the socially elite was 298, or 41 percent. By these criteria, therefore, at least four-tenths of the trustees studied can be said to have belonged to what are conventionally considered the top strata of society.

Separate tabulations for private and public university trustees revealed striking differences in social connections, and consequently in the social circles in which each group presumably moved. In terms of number per 100, 13.7 times as many trustees of private universities as of public were

found listed in *The Social Register Locator* and 4.7 times as many, in some social register. Members of private university boards also exceeded those of public university boards in professional association memberships and memberships in social clubs. Connections with military or patriotic societies were claimed by 1.3 times as many private as public university trustees and positions in other social enterprises, by 1.9 times as many. In certain other respects, public university trustees were the more outstanding. Again in terms of number per 100, 3.7 times as many public as private university trustees were members of fraternal orders; 1.7 times as many held a nonlocal public office. Also, 1.1 times as many public university trustees cited membership in business associations.

Similar contrasts distinguished trustees in professional occupations from those classified as proprietors, managers, and officials. Trustees from the professions showed higher rates for the holding of public office, for positions in educational or welfare enterprises, for membership in professional associations, and for membership in fraternal orders, whereas trustees classed as proprietors, managers, and officials showed higher rates for membership in business associations and in other societies of the social club and fraternity type; they were also listed more frequently in the various social registers. These differing social patterns lead one to suspect corresponding differences in the social orientation of private and public university trustees and in that of trustees from professional and business backgrounds.

#### OTHER EVIDENCES OF EMINENCE AND INFLUENCE

Other evidences further attest the eminence and influence of these leading trustees, and also suggest the types of endeavors in which this eminence was achieved. The search of *Who's Who in America* for biographical data revealed, for example, that 429 of the trustees studied, or 58 percent, had been chosen for inclusion in this volume. Similarly, 334, or 46 percent, were found in *Poor's Register of Directors*, 1935, a directory confined to officials and major executives of important business corporations. Also, James W. Gerard's list of 59 "men who rule the United States"<sup>39</sup>—a distinction for which Mr. Gerard chose business men exclusively—included 12 of the trustees of the present study, one of whom was a member of 2 university boards. Apparently, one-fifth of those who "rule" America also occupy the best possible trusteeships for ruling its major universities. Eminence in science was, on the other hand, less characteristic of these trustees. A complete search of *American Men of Science* (6th ed. 1938),<sup>40</sup> a directory listing approximately 28,000 scientists, revealed the names of only 36 of the trustees studied, and a number of these were trustees by virtue of being university presidents. Of the 36, only 12



were starred as distinguished, and only 6 had been newly starred in the 1921 to 1937 editions. The number of such newly starred scientists on the boards of all 30 universities was thus less than one-eleventh of the number of such scientists found by Visher on the staff of Harvard University alone in 1938, and only one percent of the 582 newly starred scientists on the staffs of 27 of these same universities in that same year.<sup>41</sup>

The selective character of the eminence achieved by these trustees is further illuminated by findings as to decorations received from foreign governments. Through inquiry at the Italian Embassy, it was ascertained that 21 of the trustees studied had been decorated by the Italian government during the years 1927 to 1937, when the Fascist dictatorship was in power there.<sup>42</sup> The titles conferred included: "Cavaliere dell' Ordine della Corona d'Italia," and variations beginning "Ufficiale," "Commendatore," and "Grande Ufficiale." Certain trustees likewise were known to have received decorations from the Nazi government in Germany. A parallel inquiry at the Russian Embassy revealed, however, that although 8 Americans had been awarded the "Order of the Red Banner" for outstanding services in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, none of the trustees studied was among those so honored.

Still another type of recognition, less obvious to the world at large, but nevertheless very rewarding, is that involved in the selection of individuals to be recipients of special favors dispensed by the leaders of high finance. An illustration of this form of profitable recognition is found in the so-called Morgan "preferred list." The list of persons to whom J. P. Morgan & Co. in 1927-29 sold substantial blocks of "new issue" securities at less than their market value<sup>43</sup> included 22 of the university trustees studied and the agents of 2 others. These 24 trustees held at the time of the study a total of 26 board memberships covered in this study. The dollars-and-cents value of some of these favors proved to be substantial. For example, one of these recipients, who held trusteeships in 8 colleges and universities, bought 2,000 shares of Alleghany stock at \$20 a share from this firm when market prices on the day of purchase ranged from \$31 to \$35 per share. Another trustee, a member of 2 of the governing boards studied, bought 1,000 shares of the same stock under the same circumstances, and later bought from the same firm 1,000 shares of Standard Brands at \$32 when the market price was between \$36½ and \$37. Some two years earlier this same trustee also had purchased from J. P. Morgan & Co. 500 Shares of Johns-Manville at \$57½ when the market price was \$79. Whether these very substantial favors were purely the reward of friendship or high esteem, or whether a more specific *quid pro quo* existed was not fully clarified in the hearings in which these facts were revealed.<sup>44</sup> Regardless of the basis of the exchange, however, trustees thus favored

would seem to have ample reason to wish to retain the goodwill of this firm and might consequently be influenced thereby in certain of their attitudes toward various university policies.

#### OPINIONS ON SELECTED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Finally, the opinions of these trustees, particularly as they related to certain economic, social, and political issues, were explored for added clues to the social orientation of these key persons in higher education. Originally, a search of their writings for statements of points of view was begun, but this approach was soon abandoned as impractical. In order not to omit entirely a consideration of opinions, an opinion poll was then undertaken in the fall of 1936, the details of which were planned with the aid of a member of the professional staff of the American Institute of Public Opinion. To secure controls needed for interpretation, a few questions duplicating some of the Institute's questions of that period were included, as well as questions asking each trustee's vote in the 1932 presidential election and his current choice of candidates. The ballots obviously had to be distributed by mail, for personal interviews with the trustees were entirely impractical. Nevertheless, the proportion of response was gratifying. After three follow-up efforts, usable replies totalled 301.<sup>45</sup> These constituted a 43 percent response from the 698 trustees still living at the time of the poll—a percentage of returns that compares favorably with that on Gallup poll questionnaires mailed to persons listed in *Who's Who in America* and is much higher than the usual mail return from other population segments.

The questions used in the poll are reproduced in Table 24, together with statistics on the distribution of replies and certain comparative data. Trustees were asked their presidential votes and their opinions on such current issues as unemployment, relief, strikes, militarism, academic freedom, and groups that should be represented on university and industrial boards. The replies are believed to reflect the true opinions of those responding, for ballots were returned unsigned and there was no known temptation to falsify. Opportunity to record shades of opinion and reservations was lacking, however, as in most polls. Also, the probability of a bias in the liberal direction due to incomplete and selective returns must be admitted, for a consistently higher percentage of returns was received from groups from whom liberal responses could be expected than from groups of known conservative tendencies.<sup>46</sup> The bias due to higher returns from the younger age groups was corrected,<sup>47</sup> but similar corrections for other probable biases were not feasible. Therefore, it seems fair to conclude that the replies reported in Table 24 understate by some un-

known margin the degree of conservatism actually characteristic of these trustees.

In view of the probable direction of this bias, the conservative positions taken by the trustees who responded to the poll acquire added significance. It will be recalled that the votes on presidential candidates, already reported in the preceding political analysis, showed strong Republican leanings. The analysis of the opinion questions indicated, moreover, that the position of these trustees on unemployment and relief issues was fully consistent with their party vote. Eighty-one percent of these trustees expressed the opinion that "governmental expenditures for relief" should "be decreased," while another 10 percent gave no response, leaving only 9 percent who definitely opposed cuts in relief. During this same period, Gallup poll findings on a similar issue showed that only 56 percent of the general population favored decreased relief expenditures, while 44 percent were definitely opposed to a decrease.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, 59 percent of the trustees responding opposed giving government "jobs at prevailing wages" to "unemployed persons who are willing to work." Forty percent of the trustees voting even believed that "citizens on the public relief rolls" should "be barred from voting"—a highly undemocratic proposal, which, if adopted, would have resulted in disenfranchising millions of unemployed through no fault of their own. These votes hardly reveal any large measure of confidence in, or generosity toward, this less fortunate group.

Strikes, compulsory military training, and the activities of munitions manufacturers were three other lively issues of the day. Sit-down strikes were then in the news and *Merchants of Death*<sup>49</sup> was being widely read and discussed. Again the conservatism of these trustees was revealed by their vote, for 30 percent favored making strikes illegal and 34 percent, making lockouts illegal. Almost half of these key persons in higher education who expressed an opinion also favored "compulsory military training in publicly supported higher educational institutions." Likewise, at a time when 82 percent of the general population voted on the Gallup poll for the prohibition of "the manufacture and sale of war munitions for private profit," only 55 percent of the trustees responding shared this opinion.<sup>50</sup>

For membership on the boards of directors of industrial plants, 9 in 10 of the trustees voting favored stockholders, and 7 in 10, the managerial staff. Representation of employees was favored by only 4 in 10; of large creditors, by 3 in 10; and of consumers, by somewhat more than one in 10. About a year later the Gallup poll asked the somewhat different but related question: "Do you think corporations would have less labor trouble if workers had the right to elect a representative on the board of directors?" In response, 67 percent replied "Yes."<sup>51</sup> If comparison with the 39



percent vote of these trustees on employee representation is justified, these trustees can be said once again to have taken a position well to the right of the population at large.

Only on issues of academic freedom did comparisons indicate a greater degree of so-called "liberal" opinion among these trustees than among the population at large. As compared with 38 percent of the general population, only 18 percent of the trustees responding believed that the schools should not "teach the facts about all forms of government, including communism, fascism, and socialism." Similarly, only 34 percent of these trustees maintained that college teachers should not "be free to express their views on all subjects including government and religion," as compared with 41 percent in the general population. How many trustees held mental reservations to replies supporting academic freedom is not known. One trustee, the president of a steel company, who voted on these questions in favor of freedom, qualified his vote by adding "but with some method of stopping the radicals." While it is a hopeful sign that these key trustees favored academic freedom to a somewhat greater extent than did the general population,<sup>52</sup> should this not be the least to expect of the views of select key men with years of experience in the government of higher education when their views are compared with those of the average citizen, often poorly educated, unenlightened, and intolerant? Rather, should one not be disturbed over the one-third of these trustees in one instance and one-fifth in the other who, even though they governed at the university level where the traditions of academic freedom are more fully recognized than at lower levels, nevertheless acknowledged in writing the conviction that the scope and freedom of teaching should be restricted?

Finally, the view of these university board members as to the types of persons who should compose university boards is of special interest for the present study. More of those responding believed business men should be represented on such boards than favored inclusion of any other group. Professional men received the second highest vote and alumni, the third highest. Practically 9 in 10 approved including each of those groups already constituting the usual membership of university boards. No new additions to this traditional list, however, received a majority vote. Women board members ranked next, with about one in 3 of those voting favoring their inclusion.<sup>53</sup> Representation of faculty on governing boards received almost as high a vote as did women trustees, while students came at the bottom of the list with only one vote in 10. Apparently the large majority of those responding did not believe that either faculty or students, the two groups most intimately concerned with the processes of higher education, should participate in its government at this level. On

the other hand, a significant minority would seem to have been willing to consider a broader plan of representation that would have included women and faculty as board members, but their numbers would not have been sufficient to alter the *status quo* in board composition.

A detailed study of poll responses in order to ascertain the types of trustees returning liberal as contrasted with conservative responses could be very significant for the evaluation of the related characteristics of trustees; however, the incomplete and selective nature of the returns and the small samples in many subgroups make conclusions in this area very hazardous. Nevertheless, the pattern of votes, though including many exceptions, is sufficiently consistent in its larger outlines to warrant a brief report of this general pattern in simplified form and without emphasis on detailed percentages. For purposes of such an analysis, a conservative position on general public issues was defined as a vote for—

- (1) barring relief recipients from voting
- (2) reducing relief expenditures
- (3) making strikes illegal
- (4) compulsory military training in public colleges

and a vote against—

- (1) jobs at prevailing wages for relief recipients
- (2) representation of employees on industrial boards

Under this definition, the opposite response on each item would, of course, be defined as the liberal (or radical) position. Since responses on academic freedom and faculty representation appeared to follow a different pattern, they were omitted from the above definition, along with several items on which the nature of a liberal versus a conservative stand was more doubtful.

When this definition was applied to the numerous detailed tabulations of responses, the replies on the general public issues listed above presented the following dichotomies:

- (1) Those declaring a Republican political preference in one form or another were more conservative in their votes than those declaring a Democratic preference.
- (2) Older persons were more conservative than younger persons.
- (3) Men trustees were more conservative than women trustees.
- (4) Proprietors, managers, and officials were more conservative than professional persons. (The difference was, however, slight.)
- (5) Bankers and manufacturers both were more conservative than the average, while educators, combined with public officials, and clergymen were more liberal than the average. (Lawyers and manufacturing officials both approximated the average.)

- (6) Those of known net taxable income or salary were more conservative than those of unknown net taxable income or salary.
- (7) Those holding directorships or major executive positions, whether in the 400 largest businesses or in any business, were more conservative than those not holding such positions.
- (8) Private university trustees were more conservative than public university trustees.

The generally conservative nature of the total response previously reported was thus obviously the result of the preponderance on these boards of members drawn from the more conservative component groups.

Responses favoring the representation of students and women on governing boards appeared to follow the general pattern of liberal responses on the foregoing public issues. Opinions on other academic issues, however, particularly those on academic freedom and representation of faculty and alumni on boards, were differently associated with social and economic factors. Upper economic status, strong business ties, and relationships with private universities (whether in board function, previous education, or method of appointment) did not preclude in these areas an average proportion of liberal responses. In fact, those with one or another type of public university experience or background were, on the whole, rather more illiberal than were private university trustees in replies on these issues. Possibly these private university trustees had acquired a greater degree of intellectual sophistication from their relatively greater length of service on university governing boards, or from their more extensive and perhaps less vocationally oriented education, or from subsequent contacts with private universities. Possibly, for other reasons, they were less fearful than public university trustees that academic freedom or faculty representation would jeopardize their basic interests.

In spite of these apparent exceptions on specific university issues and other occasional irregularities, the relation between the social and economic ideas of these trustees and their objective social and economic status was very apparent in the votes returned. Not only did the votes as a whole reflect a highly conservative pattern consistent with the known high stakes of these persons in the maintenance of the existing social and economic order, but also those specific groups within the total who had more than average reason to wish to maintain the *status quo* returned an unusually high proportion of conservative votes.

It is precisely this close tie between an individual's thinking and his life situation, status, and experiences that gives to a study of the economic and social composition of university boards its significance for the policies and ends of higher education. The effect of one's relationship to a ruling class upon one's ideas and personal perspective has been sub-



jected to penetrating analysis by Karl Mannheim in his book, *Ideology and Utopia*. He has phrased this relationship as follows:

The ideological element in human thought . . . is always bound up with the existing life-situation of the thinker. . . .

It could be shown in all cases that not only do fundamental orientations, evaluations, and the content of ideas differ but that the manner of stating a problem, the sort of approach made, and even the categories in which experiences are subsumed, collected, and ordered vary according to the social position of the observer.<sup>64</sup>

The foregoing analysis of the return from the public opinion poll would seem to demonstrate that the trustees of these universities were no exception to this generalization. Not only do these poll votes, considered in conjunction with other evidences in the present and previous chapters, confirm Stephen P. Duggan's observation that a university board is "essentially a conservative body,"<sup>65</sup> but they also support the deduction that this conservatism is an almost unavoidable consequence when a preponderance of a given trustee group belongs to the upper strata of society.

## CHAPTER XIII

# METHODS OF APPOINTMENT AND LENGTH OF SERVICE IN RELATION TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

*After all has been presented and argued, it may be safely asserted that a wholly dependable legal formula for constituting these boards has not yet been written—EDWARD C. ELLIOTT.<sup>1</sup>*

IN ADDITION to the foregoing findings directly related to the economic and social composition of university boards, those revealing an association between certain legal stipulations and board composition are also significant, for they suggest that legal readjustments may afford one means for effecting changes in board composition. In the present study it was feasible to analyze the characteristics associated with only two types of legal stipulations, namely, those concerning method of appointment and length of service.

### METHODS OF APPOINTMENT

For purposes of investigating the association between method of appointment and social and economic characteristics, the trustees were divided into the following subgroups: (1) those designated by co-option, (2) those designated by alumni, (3) those designated by elected state officials, (4) those publicly elected, (5) those holding trusteeships ex officio, and (6) those designated by miscellaneous processes. The methods by which the trustees of specific universities were appointed are recorded in Table 25, while certain aspects of the social and economic composition of the groups appointed by each method are summarized in Table 26. The related text discusses briefly the relative merits of each method of appointment and the major economic and social characteristics of trustees so appointed. Necessarily, the basis of classification was formal legal procedure since information as to the hidden social processes influencing actual selections was not available to the author. One college president, after serving in that office 35 years, testified that regardless of the legal processes applied, board members by their influence and suggestions actually chose their successors.<sup>2</sup>

*Co-option*

The most common method used in naming the trustees studied was that known as "co-option," that is, the filling of a vacancy by vote of the remaining board members. This procedure creates what is known technically as a "close corporation." Terms are normally for life. In defense of this method of selection, students have claimed that it fosters continuity, affords some protection against storms of public opinion and political and religious controversies, and gives the choice to persons closely in touch with university needs. In criticism of the method, they point to its remoteness from, and unresponsiveness to, popular control, control by constituents, or external controls of any type—a condition that makes it difficult to remedy abuses effectively and to accomplish needed reforms. They claim that this method also tends strongly toward conservatism, for board majorities<sup>3</sup> are given power to eliminate unwanted minorities and to perpetuate both their own point of view and the university *status quo* in general. Elliott, Chambers, and Ashbrook reported that a co-opted board tends to fill the places of deceased members with men of the same generation and of the same political, religious, and social outlook, and thus fails to adapt itself to social progress.<sup>4</sup>

In another volume President Elliott wrote:

Practical experience . . . shows conclusively that self-perpetuating boards are exposed to the risks of becoming devitalized through active and inactive conservatism which comes through social and class inbreeding.<sup>5</sup>

In spite of fundamental criticisms of this method,<sup>6</sup> 307, or 42 percent, of the trustees studied had been co-opted.<sup>7</sup> Although no state university board member studied had been appointed by this method, all but one of the private university boards included some members so appointed, and 4 boards used this method exclusively.

The 307 trustees thus selected displayed consistent extremes in economic and social composition. Among trustees named by co-option, proprietors, managers, and officials outnumbered professional persons 3 to 2, and manufacturers exceeded manufacturing officials 5 to 1. Nearly one-fourth were bankers and one-fifth, lawyers. No homemakers whatever were found among co-opted trustees, and only 4 public officials. Four-fifths were directors or major executives of business concerns, and two-fifths carried such responsibilities for one or more of the 400 largest corporations in the country—almost twice as great a proportion as was found in any other comparable group. Analysis by subclasses consistently revealed especially high proportions of co-opted trustees with such responsibilities in 3 or more firms of each type. In measures of income, the co-



opted trustees again ranked as the top group. Net taxable incomes for 1924 were found for a substantially higher proportion of this group than of any other, while those of known incomes showed the highest median income and by far the highest proportion with incomes at levels of \$100,000 or over yearly. Among those with unknown net taxable incomes, co-opted trustees also ranked as the top group in median known salaries, and almost at the top in the proportion with known salary.

In other types of measures, this group was likewise extreme. Co-opted trustees showed the highest median age (62 years), the smallest proportion under 50, and the highest proportion 60 and over. All 6 trustees age 85 or over had been co-opted, but only one of 8 under 35. One trustee was originally co-opted at the advanced age of 82. This high age level of co-opted trustees must be ascribed in the main to the life tenure traditions typically associated with co-option. The median length of service of co-opted trustees as of the date of study was distinctly the longest of any group (11 years), while their median age at first appointment was relatively young (48 years).<sup>8</sup> Among these universities, appointment by co-option also produced a high proportion of trustees with residence in 8 large cities, but no trustees of rural residence and no women trustees. More than half of the co-opted trustees had been born in New England or the Middle Atlantic States, where most of the private universities they governed were located. Many, however, resided outside the state in which they served as trustee. In most measures of education, co-opted trustees fell below those named by alumni, but in honorary degrees they exceeded the alumni group, 30 percent of co-opted trustees having received such degrees. Co-opted trustees also ranked highest in the proportion mentioning memberships in 3 or more social clubs (78 percent) and highest in the percent listed in some social register (62 percent). Both in votes reported on the opinion ballots and in declared political affiliation, they showed the highest percentage of Republicans of any group—roughly 80 percent of the known total by both measures. The pattern of evidence is thus remarkably consistent. Through co-option wealthy and conservative directors and major executives of large-scale business have been placed in large numbers in positions involving great and irrevocable power over the nation's leading private universities.

#### *Designation by Alumni*

A smaller proportion of the trustees studied had been designated by alumni or alumni associations. In favor of this method, the claim is made that it places power in a group outside the university, whose members,

nevertheless, know its processes, are tied to it by sentiment and experience, are interested in its welfare, and are devoted to its ideals. The method has the disadvantages, however, that it risks stultification through inbreeding and may encourage undue emphasis by boards on sophomoric sentimentality and the proselyting of athletes, such as has been too often characteristic of alumni associations.<sup>9</sup> Trustees elected by alumni are also remote from popular control and may, in fact, represent the administration rather than alumni as a result of the influence of alumni secretaries appointed by the administration. Because of the economic selection involved in reaching alumni status, particularly in the case of alumni of these leading and often high-tuition universities, this method also assures upper-class control with its accompanying danger of dominance by vested economic interests. In spite of these various objections, however, 10 of the 30 boards studied included one or more trustees designated by alumni, while a total of 109 trustees, or 15 percent, had been thus named. All except 3 of these were members of the boards of private universities.

In evidences of close ties with large-scale business, alumni representatives ranked second only to co-opted trustees. Forty-eight percent were proprietors, managers, or officials; 16 percent were bankers; and 19 percent, lawyers. In contrast to co-opted trustees, however, manufacturing officials slightly outnumbered manufacturers in this group. Alumni representatives also ranked second from the top in (1) percent for whom 1924 net taxable incomes were found, (2) median net taxable income of those of known income, (3) percent for whom salaries or net taxable incomes were known, (4) percent who were directors or major executives of business concerns, (5) percent who were directors or major executives in the 400 largest businesses, and (6) percent of Republicans among those of known affiliation or vote. On the other hand, trustees selected by alumni formed the youngest of the groups and included among their numbers 3 percent women. Only 2 percent reported a rural residence, however, and more than three-fourths had been born in the New England or the Middle Atlantic States. Like the co-opted trustees, those chosen by alumni often lived outside the state where they served as trustee. In a number of criteria, alumni representatives exceeded those chosen by any other method. Specifically, those chosen by alumni showed the highest proportions of the following: (1) persons holding earned bachelor's degrees, (2) persons holding master's degrees without the doctorate, (3) persons with degrees from prominent colleges (Lindeman's list of 18), (4) persons with connections with military or patriotic societies, (5) per-